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# THE WHITEBOY;

## A STORY OF IRELAND,

IN 1822.

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# THE WHITEBOY;

## A STORY OF IRELAND,

IN 1822.

BY

MRS. S. C. HALL.

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"A Country ever hardly used!"

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IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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# THE WHITEBOY.

## CHAPTER I.

### THE VOYAGE.

EARLY in the month of June, in the year 1822, one of the first steam-boats that voyaged between England and Ireland, was moving along the narrow Avon. The deck was thronged with passengers, watching and commenting upon the long pennon-like line of smoke, that indicated a head wind; in spite of which they were told they might reach the Irish coast before the next day's sunset—intelligence that appeared incredible to some, who had been accustomed to many mischances between the ports of Bristol and Cork—"puttings in and puttings back"—while others found it difficult to believe that a voyage hitherto considered an intolerable evil, could be converted into a brief party of pleasure; its duration, a matter of certainty; subjected to few annoyances, no peril, and, in reality, less fatiguing than

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the journey would have been if the two countries were joined by a bridge across St. George's Channel.

The evening was so mild and genial, that the ladies continued to linger on deck long after they had passed the entrance of the picturesque river, and the shores of Wales and Devon were growing dim in the approaching twilight. The passengers, as usual, were divided into small knots; turning their thoughts to any subject in the hope of avoiding, or at least postponing, the payment of a tax extorted from all who are new to ocean dangers. As the night drew on, the less daring gradually disappeared, the deck became thinner and thinner, and the few who remained, seemed determined to enjoy the invigorating sea-breeze, and the gentle light of the new moon, as far preferable to the close atmosphere and limited space of the over-crowded cabin.

Among them was a lady whose interest was apparently absorbed by the motion of the paddle-wheels, which she appeared to watch intently, as she leaned over the side of the vessel. She was a young widow—the Lady Mary O'Brien—the widow of a distinguished officer, whom she had accompanied to Madeira, hoping its mild climate might arrest the progress of a disease, the seeds of which had been sown while in honourable service in the Peninsula. The effort was vain; the attempt only hastened his dissolution; his body was consigned to the waves before the shores of the health-giving island were reached, and the bereaved wife returned alone to England. England, however, was not her country; her sojourn there was brief; she was now

proceeding homeward to shelter in her father's house. Lady Mary was accompanied by her brother, a fine youth verging on manhood; a casual observer might have conjectured that she had another companion also —a gentleman, who, though not a relative, was probably a familiar friend, privileged to stand by her side, and, at times, monopolise her conversation.

"And you think I shall be disappointed in my expectation of Ireland?" he said, in answer to some observation of the Lady Mary, as she looked suddenly up from the foaming waters.

"Yes," she replied, "you will be disappointed; I am sure of that."

"With the peasantry?"

"No; those who rate them very high, are not likely to overrate them."

"With the aspect of the country?"

"Possibly; but not with its scenic beauty."

"With society in general?" continued the gentleman, in the same tone of inquiry.

"I really do not so well know what you expect from 'Irish society in general,' as to be able to answer that question. You may 'expect' to be vastly amused by the brogue and the blunders. You may 'expect' every young lady to be a diverting hoyden, and every gentleman a good shot. You may 'expect' wit and starvation to greet your arrival. You may 'expect' to find Spencer Court reduced to a heap of ruins by the Whiteboys, who have lately furnished so many 'daring outrages' to greedy newspapers. You may 'expect' to be called out by a brother because you danced

with his sister twice on one evening—without proposing. In your simplicity you may 'expect' to find a humane middleman; a grand jury incapable of jobbing; land let at a reasonable rent; but—" and while she paused to laugh, the expression of her face changed from that of the most provoking *espiéglerie* to one serious and full of intelligence, "but you are of course aware that two religious and political parties divide the island; two, born on the same land, yet agreeing in one thing only—the hatred they bear each other."

"I do hope you are not rightly informed," said the young Englishman.

"Alas! I am," she answered. "We are two nations on one soil; Celt and Saxon, Roman and Protestant, Irish Irish and English Irish; in England you do not understand this; but we do; perhaps you may—after a time. There may be individual exceptions—I thank God there are, and many; but the parties hate each other; and between them, which to cleave to, and which to shun, you will be speedily called to make election; be sure of *that*. I have smiled over what you said a few minutes ago—that you intend to live in Ireland, and belong to no party."

Mr. Spencer drew a seat close to that of the Lady Mary, and assumed the look of a man determined to record his resolve and assign his reasons for it.

But the lady was in no mood to listen. "No," she said, "I have already heard enough; you are one of the 'inconvinceables,' and I anticipate much amusement from the delightful perplexities you will have to encounter. The idea of Mr. Spencer, of Spencer-Court (some Cas-

tle Dangerous of the south), and of many hard, cold, Scottish acres in Donegall, being permitted by our mercurial people to do as he pleases; to dream of being allowed to steer a middle course, undulating between orange and green, with a leaf of our southern shamrock in one button-hole, and a petal of the northern lily in the other, dancing down the middle with an Orangeman on his right hand and a Whiteboy on his left, then up again with the Whiteboy on his right and the Orangeman on his left!—it is really too ridiculous. I repeat, you do not seem to consider—perhaps you do not know—that we are two people—the Anglo-Irish, and—" her lip curled a little as she spoke it—" the mere Irish; two religions; yet your wise law-givers will legislate for us as if we were one people and one religion. And *you* think to progress among us just as calmly as you have done among your well-fed, well-clothed tenants in sunny Berkshire, where peace and plenty, and a score of other comforts, have made the rich contented, and the poor prosperous—each being the helpmate of the other."

" But, my dear Lady Mary," he interrupted, " I am convinced it is only a calm and moderate, yet a fixed and steady, middle course that can be beneficial to Ireland."

" Granted," replied the lady, " but at the moment I was thinking of you, and not of the country. Nay, you need not bow; I was only thinking how absurd a moderate man would appear among our immoderate people; thinking, moreover, who the magician is, or what the miracle will be, that can make a middle course popular."

" I do not think," replied Mr. Spencer, looking more

than usually serious, "I do not think a resolve to persevere in what I honestly consider the only system that can be attended with desirable results to the country, however it may inflict pain and injury on myself, deserves to be noted as absurd. I am visiting Ireland with a determination to do my best for the people without reference to person or to party."

Lady Mary shook her head, and a deep and earnest expression again overshadowed her features.

"You are right," she said, "quite right, and, believe me, I did but jest; we *mere* Irish are accustomed to laugh even at our miseries—the only way we have of getting rid of them; but those who come among us with a real desire to see and hear for themselves, and then do us service, if they can, deserve our gratitude, and may God bless their good work!"

At this moment a venerable-looking gentleman passed close to Lady Mary O'Brien; she rose and extended her hand to him; the greeting was cordial, but it awoke some painful thoughts and feelings, for immediately afterwards she turned away to hide tears that fell into the foaming and rushing waves, as she again bent over the side of the steamer. Mr. Spencer immediately opened a book, and seemed to read, but he was too deeply interested by the people about him to pay much attention to the volume he held in his hand; a knot of "Parliament Men" stood close together, discussing some popular or unpopular measure of the Session, and not looking particularly worn or overworked. One little, animated, restless man, had the ear of his companions, and uttered his opinions in a shrill voice, ex-

pressing as much by his pantomime as by his words, while a bright-eyed, burley gentleman, who seemed full of the good things of this life, and especially of rich, abounding, overflowing humour, " cut in" every now and then upon the small orator's eloquence: and his interruptions were invariably followed by the abundant harmony of Irish laughter, up-rolling from Irish hearts. At the opposite side of the ship, reclining upon a pile of cushions, and coats and cloaks, was a young girl, evidently in the last stage of consumption; her mother, who sat by her side, was pressing the thin, fleshless fingers in her large hand, and holding them as tightly as if her grasp could retain the life that seemed rapidly ebbing. In return for kind suggestions from many who had never seen them before, and would probably never see them again, she said " her darling" couldn't bear the close air below; she could hardly breathe where they were; she had taken her to a great London doctor, who had done her no good, and now her whole cry was to be carried home; and the young woman echoed the words with her feeble lips, and still feebler breath, and murmured, " Home, mother, home !" A nursery girl, or, as she desired to be considered, " a lady's maid," was fruitlessly endeavouring to do several things at once, " hushowing" in her arms a particularly cross baby, who would cry, and endeavouring to prevent a breach of the peace between an ugly cur named Jessie and a " bould boy," who insisted upon pulling Jessie by the tail, when nurse wanted her to come forward, by the string, which was twisted round what (figuratively) would be called her *little* finger. As

this inconvenient group staggered along the deck, Jessie every now and then snapping at the gentlemen's toes, while young master stumbled over them, Mr. Spencer was much amused by a sort of monologue the "lady's maid" was getting through, *sotto voce*, the wide borders of her cap flapping sail-fashion in the wind, while the "floating" of her "light English cotton" exhibited a pair of remarkably stout limbs, safely cased in black worsted stockings.

"Masther Tim, Masther Tim, avick, let the baste's tale alone, dear; she's English, my darlint, and not used to do any thing she dosn't plase, jewel; not like yer own little Pincher at home, that never offered to bite any thing, barring the tax-man;" then a great squall from the baby, called her attention to the plunging parcel she found it hard enough to manage.

"Whisht, whisht, darlint, you'll disturb your maama, that's in the cabin. Oh, then, I wish from my very sowl they'd as fine cabins on shore as they have tossing on the say, just for sport. Whisht! Oh! murder, what'll I do with you in the night, at all at all, and the sixpen'orth of barley-sugar gone already!"

There were many other children, and one or two other servants; but the latter, from their quiet manner, Mr. Spencer supposed were not "natives," and the children were returning from English schools. "Och, my sorrow!" muttered the guardian of the child and dog, as the party promenaded by; "I beg your pardon, sir, but will ye tell me what o'clock it is?"

Mr. Spencer, not being aware of the propensity of the Irish peasant to know how time goes, was amused, but

answered; and the woman resumed, "We shall have twinty hours of it still, through wind and waather; all for what?—going to a watering-place; and I give ye my word, sir, for all it was done out like a paradise, where they drank it—the water I mane—the river Shannon would be ashamed of the shadow of an Irish face, if it was like that dirty iron trash they went so far to drink. Are we in the Irish sea yet, yer honour?"

The young Englishman was somewhat astonished at the easy, yet respectful manner of the woman, and would have replied; but, apparently to avoid a gentleman who was walking up and down the deck, she muttered, "The Lord preserve us, and send the ship safe home," and, crossing herself, turned abruptly away.

Mr. Spencer's quick eye had noted this person from the moment he came on board, as having dismissed the lad who carried his valise, with half the usual gratuity, two tracts, and a brief expostulation on the sin of extortion. He was a remarkably tall, stout, powerful man, his frame well knit together, his chest broad and muscular, and his large head supported by a thick, red neck, round which was folded a full-sized, well stiffened, well-arranged, neck-cloth. An ordinary physiognomist would not have found it necessary to look more than once into his face before determining his character. The nose was blunt and coarse, the mouth—that truth-telling volume without words—close shut, and firm; but habit had drawn down its corners, so as to give it, particularly at times, an expression of woe and wailing, as if that single feature mourned for the sins of all its brethren, who were still sensual and stubborn.

The eyes were keen and wandering, and the full chin, and thick, heavy "jowl" was irreclaimably evil. Only that his coat was blue, instead of black, those who followed his footsteps might have supposed him a dignitary of the church, for his bearing was gentlemanly; but those who met him, and who knew Ireland—so completely did his face destroy the effect of his figure—would have called him an attorney or a middleman, and put up a prayer for those of whom he claimed his dues. As he in his turn passed Mr. Spencer, he said, in a strong Munster accent, softened to a whine: "A most blessed evening, Sir; a crowning mercy to have such an evening."

Mr. Spencer bowed—he felt so much repugnance to the person that he could not answer him civilly. Perhaps this coldness disturbed the seemingly placid humour of the man; for immediately after, "Masther Tim," who had contrived to cut the dog's string, came running and tumbling over every thing in his way, and consequently over the disdained gentleman's feet and ancles; the boy ran on—the dog doubled to get to her protector, and again inconvenienced the same person, who turned hastily round, his face red with abrupt passion, and dealing the animal a kick that sent it spinning along the deck, exclaimed, with a sort of oath abridged, "Get out of my way, ye're as bad as the Papists."

"It's a grate compliment ye've paid her," said the servant, with a look of contempt that kindled into one of fierceness before the sentence was finished, and while the cross baby was crying on one arm, she "tucked"

the dog under the other. "It's a grate compliment ye've paid her, Mr. Richards, Sir; but ye're wrong, Sir; she comes of a Protestant family; one of your own sort—barring she's not a turn-coat." The taunt goaded as bitterly as the woman intended it should, for Mr. Richards had once held a different, and far less popular faith than he at that time professed.

For a moment he regarded the speaker with so fiendish a glare, that Mr. Spencer thought he would have struck her—while she, with hardly less of the demon in her face, awaited the issue. But the fire and wrath faded from the man's countenance; and then, in a soft, oily voice he said, "Oh, Betty, my good girl, is that you—and how's the mistress? I am sure I didn't know who the dog belonged to, or I would not have shoved it out of the way."

"Ah, ah!" answered Betty, "the ould story—hit him hard, he's no friends; but poor Jessie has a back still, if it's not broke, Sir. There, keep yer hand out of her way, for she bites to the bone."

"Poor fellow, poor fellow!" said Mr. Richards.

"Don't fal-lal yer fingers any more at her, or I'll not be able to keep her quiet," growled Betty, who was strongly inclined to let the angry animal go.

"Thank you, Betty, I shall see the mistress by an' by;" then he added, in a sort of whisper, "have you any time for reading, my poor girl?" and he put his hand into his capacious pocket to take out a tract.

"Will I have a shilling?" answered Betty, affecting not to understand him, "I'd be sorry to refuse, Sir—the first time of asking," she said, a sly expression of humour chasing away the venom that had a mo-

ment before tainted every feature of her round ruddy face.

Mr. Richards looked perplexed—or, as the woman would have expressed it, "bothered," and muttering something about "no small change," repocketed his pamphlet, and turned away.

The steamer went boldly on her voyage with her mingled cargo of different creeds, and totally different views, sweeping forwards, foaming and groaning as if discontented with her freight.

Mr. Spencer's attention was next drawn towards two singularly beautiful and graceful girls, who were earnestly expressing to their father, (the old gentleman with whom Lady Mary O'Brien had so warmly shaken hands,) the delight they felt at returning home after a few weeks of absence.

They were young Irish gentlewomen; frank and warm in manner, yet protected by a dignity and delicacy of deportment which prevented the possibility of that warmth and frankness being misunderstood; they conversed with the poor woman whose daughter lay on the deck, and while one poured some eau-de-Cologne on her hands, and steeped her coarse cotton handkerchief in perfume, the other placed a cushion beneath her head. This was all done without parade; it was the natural discharge of a duty which the healthful owe to the suffering.

But if Mr. Spencer fancied he was the only observer on board the steam-packet, he was much mistaken. He was, although profoundly ignorant of the fact, far more the observed than the observant. He had been speculated, and commented upon, and his every move-

ment had been noted, by two women—whom it would be as unjust to present as examples of the ladies of Ireland, as it would be to point out the Monday mob at Gravesend as the gentlewomen of England; good, worthy creatures they were, in their way, only ridiculous when they sought to elbow themselves into what they would have called "carriage company." In Ireland there is a habit, which, some years ago, was stronger and more general than it is at present—by which a lady was distinguished according to her husband's profession—that is to say, provided it was a "liberal" one; no woman ever thought of being called Mrs. Grocer Finnerty—or Mrs. Housepainter Grady—or Mrs. Bookseller O'Haggerty: but there was no end to the Mrs. Counsellor Kinealeys—the Mrs. Captain Doyles—and the Mrs. Colonel O'Neils; while even a Mrs. Attorney Higgins was unwilling that her "rank" should be overlooked. It was a little bit of show, and distinction, which in the simple vanity of their hearts, they enjoyed; no harm in it; yet it was one of the things that struck Mr. Spencer—as it does every stranger—as odd and absurd, when he heard a lady tell her servant to go down to the cabin, and ask the steward for Mrs. Counsellor Brown's Cashmere shawl.

The two who took such interest in Mr. Spencer, were a Mrs. Counsellor Hackett, who talked loud in a rich, full, Cork voice and accent, to Mrs. Attorney Murphy—"I've a great mind, my dear, to go up and make myself known to that illigant crature, Lady Mary O'Brien," said Mrs. Hackett; "if she wasn't so short-sighted she'd know me a mile off. I've known *her*

since she was the hoight of a green rush, and I'd like to do it, just to take the shine out of Mrs. Brown; ever since they set up a carriage, she boasts she'll keep none but carriage, and the first county, company; yet she never had a lady of title enter her doors—I *reely* think I will; for I should like to know who HE is, above all earthly things, and maybe she'd introduce me; he seems mighty sweet upon her, and she so short a time a widow."

"I'll tell the counsellor, so I will, Mrs. Hackett, dear," lisped pretty little Mrs. Attorney.

"Oh, bother, nonsense!" exclaimed the jovial looking lady; "God be praised, I've no daughters of my own to get off now, but there's the counsellor's two sisters, and my own three nieces—charming, illigant cratures! at any rate, I'd like to know who he is; I'm certain that he's the right thing; he's one of us, I'm sure."

"I don't agree with you, and I hope you'll excuse me for it, ma'am," said Mrs. Murphy; "I heerd his own man say, that his master was going to Derry."

"To Derry!" exclaimed Mrs. Hackett, in a tone of deep indignation, "to Derry!—to the heart of the black North! Himself in a bottle-green cloak of beautiful Spanish cloth, and his servants in grass-green liveries! Mrs. Murphy, it's impossible, it's not mad he'd be to go to the North—himself in a bottle-green cloak, and his two fine servant-men in grass-green liveries! He'd be murdered; he can't know the ways of the country; it would be only Christian charity to tell him, for may be he's a stranger from France or Spain—I'm sure he is ma'am; he's so dark, with Italian eyes, such as they

have in Rome, and such a noble air. May the saints protect the dear young gentleman ! but it's almost a point of conscience to put him on his guard. Oh ! that I should ever hear a bottle-green cloak and grass-green liveries talk of going to the bitter black North !"

"I wonder your friend Lady Mary O'Brien does not tell him," suggested Mrs. Murphy.

"Thath ! my dear ! Lady Mary, though she ought to be what all her seed, breed, and generation were, as good, and better than ourselves, has been wandering in England ; her husband was a Protestant, and she was always mighty liberal—and more than that—."

The steamer had now got fully into the open sea, and in addition to its usual shaking, commenced rolling as ships will do, despite all that is said to the contrary ; Mrs. Hackett bore up against these sea miseries with the air of a heroine ; but at last, as Mrs. Murphy assisted her in descending the cabin stairs, she looked into her friend's face, with an air of intense suffering, and exclaimed, "Oh dear ! dear ! darling ! It isn't the *shake*, but the *rowl* of it, that's killing me !"

## CHAPTER II.

### THE KEY-NOTE.

THE night was passing without any occurrence to disturb the monotony of a "Night at Sea;" there was the dim, uncertain light of the full-orbed, but often clouded moon—the twinkling of the mysterious stars—the rush and roll of the waters—the spray falling on the deck—the heavy tramp of the few watchers—the motion and shaking of the engine increasing the vibration "natural" to a legitimate ship—the heavy smell of the oil—and in the cabins the half-sleepy complaints and querulous grumblings of the passengers—the coming forth of all the little, mean selfishness of human nature, redeemed, however, by the self-sacrifices of some who give up the pillow or vinaigrette to those who need it more than themselves. Mr. Spencer folded himself in his cloak,—"the bottle-green," which had excited "Mrs. Counsellor's" sympathy—and continued on deck long after his fair friend, and the greater number of passengers had disappeared. Edward Spencer's nature was that of a deep-minded, thoughtful, refined Englishman; slow to receive impressions, but

clinging to them with a tenacity which hardly admitted of change. He could not entertain a single paltry feeling—his manners were as calm and as classic as his mind. The romance of Irish history, and the romance of the Irish people, had entered his heart; though he never quoted poetry, and could as easily have turned the world on its axis as a tune, the patriotic songs of Moore were treasured in his memory; and Irish heroism, without distinction of party, was one of the idols of his mind-worship; he took extensive views both of things and people, but could hardly be considered an observer of, or a carer for, small matters; thus, he was peculiarly unfitted to comprehend the bickerings and bitternesses, the petty malignant nothings which form the superstructure of Irish discontent, frequently to the exclusion of thought for actual and positive grievances. He was fully aware of the real miseries of the country, thoroughly indignant at the long past cruelty, and the continued neglect, which had characterised the conduct of England to a sister she never treated as an equal, nor even with the tenderness which the elder is expected to bestow upon the younger; perhaps the strongest principle of his nature was a love of justice; he was so accustomed to weigh and balance, that he never could attach himself to what is called a party; it was his habit—a habit inseparable from his moral constitution—to seek for the right path, and to follow it implicitly. During his purposed residence upon the estate to which Lady Mary had alluded, Edward Spencer had resolved to do more in one year than any practical man would have attempted to accomplish in ten, or twenty; all his plans for

the improvement of his English estates had succeeded so admirably, that he determined to apply to Irish grievances the systems and remedies he had applied to English ones; summing up his thoughts on the subject with, "they cannot be so *unreasonable* as to reject that," "they cannot upon mature consideration refuse this;" forgetting, as strangers usually do, that he had to deal with a people who feel while others reason, and who act too rapidly upon that feeling to give "mature consideration" to any earthly thing; still he was perfectly and entirely in earnest in his desire to deal justly with a long enduring country; and so truthful was his nature, that he had no intention of reserving —no wish to hide—his sentiments; though, like the generality of Englishmen, he was more reflective than experimental. He was, in short, young, full of the unscathed hope of one born to riches and station; in the enjoyment of good health, an even temper, and the glorious desire and laudable ambition of serving his fellow-creatures. As the moon rose he was still pacing the deck, pausing occasionally, and gazing towards the west, the land where he hoped his name might yet be blessed as a benefactor; he thought of the generous enthusiasm of its inhabitants, of their patient endurance, their intense earnestness! His deep devotion to his own faith taught him to sympathise with those who were ready to sacrifice their lives for that which they held sacred. His imagination erected cottages and covered them with roses; at one end of his smiling village arose the spire of a church, and at the other the cross of a chapel; the village green was in the centre and fronted

the school, from which issued children of "all denominations," well clothed, noisy with joy, and full of spirits as of health; gray-haired domestics crowded round Spencer court; the parish priest and the Protestant clergyman sat at the same board;—but who besides sat there, Lady paramount of love, and wit, and beauty? his cheek flushed, while in that direction his thoughts wandered; and as he passed his hand over his face, the vision vanished. He was neither in a smiling village, or at a well-filled board—but on the deck of the hissing, and groaning, and heaving steamer, one of the most nervous and discontented class of vessels that ever took rank among

"The monsters of the deep."

The waste of waters was around him, and a noble, stately ship, with her sails set, was bending gracefully before the breeze by which they were opposed. There was something so dignified and majestic in its motion, that he could not avoid smiling at her queenly progress, when contrasted with the noise, and opposition, and outrage of the little resolute, but most mechanical, steamer. In an incredibly short time they were again alone; again the young man's thoughts reverted to the "darling West," and his hope became stronger and more fervent that he might yet be made a blessing to the generous, affectionate people, who had found place in his heart—whom he had resolved to care for, and "conciliate," and cherish, and redress. While thus exulting in the hope of the future, which now seemed an approaching reality, his attention to the present was suddenly aroused by the old gentleman—the same who

had been recognised with so much affection by Lady Mary O'Brien.

"This steam will be a great thing for Ireland," he said, addressing Mr. Spencer; "it will indeed be a great thing, it will draw the countries closer together, induce an influx of English capital, make us better known to each other; although an Irishman, and a warm lover of my country, I do not hesitate to say it must improve us in every respect, while it will also give additional advantages to England."

"I quite agree with you," said Mr. Spencer. "In three or four years we shall see an immense difference."

"No, not quite so soon as that," answered his companion. "You must pardon me for saying such eager anticipation savours rather of Irish impatience than of English calculation. It will be a long and tedious lesson to teach England to confide in us, and still more difficult to teach us to confide in England. We have each something to forgive, and more to forget, and both a great deal to learn of one another. You are in a state of deplorable ignorance as to our wants, and powers, and characters, and we are loath to acknowledge, as were the people of old, that any good can come out of Galilee—at least to us; but rapid communication is a decided step in favour of both countries; an influx of strangers must serve us, and," he added, "I do not think—I am sorry to say so—that any mode of transit can increase the number of our ABSENTEES. May God pardon those who forget a landlord's duties, when they receive a landlord's income! But this steam will work wonders. We, standing

thus on the deck of one of the earliest of the vessels by which the voyage has been made a certainty, can hardly anticipate the vast results. You will live to see them; I shall not."

"I am sure, Sir, I hope you will," exclaimed Edward.

"Thank you for the warmth of the wish, my young friend," answered Dean Graves; "thank you truly; we Irish can bear injustice better than indifference; if you would serve us, you must not only feel for us, but express your feelings. Lady Mary O'Brien tells me you mean to do a great deal, and a great deal can be done with the tenantry of Spencer Court. I knew your uncle well, and when you are in that part of the world shall be happy to pay you any attention, or give you any information, in my power. I shall be your neighbour when you are there and I am at home."

Mr. Spencer thanked him; the voice and manner had impressed him strongly in favour of his new acquaintance. He was the perfection of a gentleman of the old school; frank and polished: he had lifted his hat at the commencement of their conversation, and his white hair floated like a halo round one of the finest heads Edward had ever seen. They had inspired each other with confidence—a feeling which arose from each involuntarily believing in the other's truth. They were the only passengers on deck during the still hour of midnight, and they sat down at the same moment as men do, when they are resolved to have a somewhat lengthened ".talk" on interesting subjects. The clergyman was again the first to commence the conversation.

"The country is fearfully disturbed just now, and I am almost sorry you are coming among us at such a time."

"I have not the least fear," replied Edward. "Lady Mary declares there is no instance on record of their injuring a stranger."

"But you are a landholder, and they may fancy you composed of ejectments and latitats," said Mr. Graves, smiling.

"No fear of that: I have forgiven them all arrears; and as I shall put every thing to rights myself—hear with my own ears—see with my own eyes, and act from my own judgment, I do not think I, for one, shall be injured."

Mr. Graves again smiled at his brave words, but made no allusion to them, simply saying, "Not in person I hope and believe. Even I have no fear of that; but take care you are not injured towards the people in heart and spirit. I dread the reaction upon such a mind, as I am told you possess. I dread the dissolving of your dream, for all knowledge of Ireland, acquired only by hearsay, leads to dreams. I dread the effect of the certain quantity of disappointment you must experience more than I do the evil whisperings or daring proclamations of those who will seek to win you to their several modes of thinking. I dread it because Ireland wants men like you—not to stand by a party, but by the country. Men with sympathies and capital, men also with MEMORIES, capable of tracing back the various causes of the people's discontent to by-gone times and by-gone events, which, however forgotten or overlooked in England, are still freshly kept in mind in

Ireland—freshly as if they were but growths of yesterday; for they are continually revived, not only by agitators of the moment, but by a higher and holier class,—of feelings as well as of men; men who love their country and honour its patriots. You may imagine that in visiting Ireland you are visiting only one people; you are visiting two."

"Two!" repeated Edward, remembering at the moment Lady Mary's words.

"It is even so,—two! Protestant Ireland and Catholic Ireland, Saxon Ireland and Celtic Ireland; but the blood of the Irish Saxon is as hotly boiling as that of the Irish Celt. They boil against each other; and, perhaps, the chief motive of union between the Saxon Irish and your country is the Church establishment; *that* is the bond which binds the Irish Protestant to England; but for that both might overboil against you, as they do now against each other."

Mr. Graves paused, and Edward for some time made no reply: he was thinking.

"I dare say," said he, at length, "that what you observe is quite true; and perhaps we deserve it should be so. We have protected a party, and not a people.—I have often heard my poor uncle say as much."

"You are right in that opinion," observed Mr. Graves, "whatever party has been dominant in England, has, to a certain extent, protected that nearest to itself in Ireland; but as the peasantry, the very, very poor, have no party, no covenant with their country, the population of Ireland have had only occasional friends. Strangers frequently, like yourself, come among us, with generous and large desires of usefulness, and kindly

and extensive sympathies, but, insensibly drawn into the vortex of party, they either become accustomed to the misery which at first appalled them, or are so overwhelmed by its extent that they turn away altogether from the voice of the weeper, and join in the common cry of want of care and providence in a population, who, even when able to obtain employment, have only existed on what, in your country, would have caused a hundred rebellions, under the name of starvations. A few speak loudly of, and feel keenly, the moral degradation that want creates; the cry of the multitude is echoed by them; and *initiated* by others—by others who augment evil by misdirecting agitation; yet, all the while they argue that the fruits of peace may be thus gathered—grapes from thorns and figs from thistles."

"The country sadly wants repose," said Edward Spencer.

"Most true," replied Mr. Graves, "but the deep sea-calm of a starving multitude, sinking by hundreds into the grave, is not, I am certain, the sort of repose which you would wish to see continued in my poor country." Neither spoke for some moments, and then Mr. Graves resumed: "Let me," he said, "again caution you against harsh judging in any case! Do not suffer the Orange party of the North to persuade you that their warmer brethren of the South are *all* violent and bigoted; nor the Roman Catholics of the South to impress you with the idea that the Orangemen of the North are all bitter and fierce destroyers; in all you hear you must take into account the quick beatings of our hearts, and our universal habit of exaggeration; not from a desire to falsify, but as is-

suing out of a rich imagination that converts us into a nation of poets. We think what we say, while we speak; but we feel strongly, and do not prepare our words before we utter them. We want judgment rather than genius."

"I am sure," said Edward, "I am delighted to hear all this; I fancied the tone of the Irish churchmen to be Puritan rather than Protestant; but Lady Mary has frequently quoted you as a specimen of what a Protestant clergyman can be to his Roman Catholic neighbours. I have heard her say that Dean Graves was kind in manners as well as generous in money, and zealous to promote friendly intercourse between Protestant and Catholic, while his charity to the poor was dispensed with an even hand."

The old gentleman shook his head. "Remember what I told you of Irish exaggeration; Lady Mary exceedingly magnifies the virtues of her friends. I must, however, in common justice to my brother clergymen state, that I believe they are individually generous to the poor Catholics, though less willing than, I think, they ought to be to extend the hand of fellowship to the ministers of the other creed; but, local circumstances have much influence with all of us. I have studied the character of the people more than many, and I know their history well; my circumstances have rendered me independent of church preferment, which, I regret to say, few of my brethren are. But, to return to the subject of my anxiety; I wish I could show those who cry out against Irish outrage and Irish discontent, a few of the palliating circumstances, which a little know-

ledge and reflection would enable them to comprehend, and I would trust the issue to the feelings of kindly sympathy implanted in every human bosom. I pray your patience; I am an old man now, but the love of my native land, of both Celt and Saxon, is as warm in my heart as it was when, in my boyhood, I joined the Irish volunteers; purer, certainly, for many of my prejudices have vanished, and I should be sorry to have some of the feelings now which I thought glorious then. Again I crave your patience only for a little time; it is cool and fresh here, and the words I have to say I would wish to speak beneath the arch of that Heaven which registers our words, for good or evil."

Edward assured Mr. Graves of his entire attention.

"You know then," recommenced the venerable gentleman, "that the heads of many of the highest of our Irish families perished in defence of their rights; treachery frequently accomplished what the sword and the law might have spared. Their lands were seized, often without a show of reason, and the descendants—as the Scotch have it, 'the kith and kin'—of the chieftain lingered in the mountain fastnesses, maintaining a guerrilla-like warfare, struggling against the power which had outraged, betrayed, starved, destroyed, all but conquered them; it is the Irish idea of fixity of tenure, that they were never conquered."

"But how would they define conquest?" inquired Edward.

"They define nothing; an Irishman's faith is equal to his feeling, and his feeling to his faith; he is told by the only persons he considers he can trust, that he has never

been conquered; he believes it, resolving never to be contented. Now mark me—in process of time the very hunters tired of pursuit; the dogs of war became wearied; they retired to the shelter of the valleys and the security of the towns; they built castles to protect their newly-acquired territory; and in their power, the hunted ones were forgotten, because despised; still, in a little time, as they crept from their fastnesses they became necessary to the settlers; they were employed as labourers—mind you, *upon their own land*, so they still considered it; they were trampled on and insulted on all occasions; they were not deemed worthy even of conciliation; it would have seemed humanity to have expatriated them at once; better to have taken their lives, when those lives were rendered a means of torture. Now mark me—even more closely—they still bear their proud ancestral names; the blood of their native princes does not stagnate in their veins; it flows as freely as though they were not as they are; their faith was outraged and insulted—"

"But not now," interrupted Edward; "though as yet they are not thoroughly emancipated, you cannot call their faith insulted now."

"Was my faith so treated in this year, 1822, I confess to you I should so consider it," was the reply. "I would be content, if it were the Almighty's will, to be called away from life to-morrow, if any such sacrifice could unite my countrymen in the bonds of my own faith, believing it to be the best and purest given from God to man; for it I would live, and for it I would die; but that does not render me insensible to the wickedness and folly of the penal statutes, which, by perpetual

insult and injustice, have mocked at national equality; it is as though a man were to place his foot upon the neck of his prostrate fellow-creature, and then, while he keeps him firmly down, to bid him rise, in all the dignity of human nature! The commonest peasant feels this, and though as a clergyman I would joy to receive those who felt themselves in error, I cannot, as a man, but respect the firmness which, despite scorn and degradation, has hitherto united the peasant to his faith, mingled though it be with a superstition, which is a part of the national religion, as well as the national poetry."

"I quite agree with you," said Mr. Spencer, "the superstition of Ireland is the foundation of its national school of poetry; its faith is intense, but I, of course, speak from thought and feeling, not from observation or experience,"

"The Irish peasant," continued Mr. Graves, "lives amid the faded glories of his country, knows and feels it; his cabin is mud-walled and miserable, yet the ruined castle he passes by, to go to his ill-remunerated labour, bears his name. This yields him a gloomy satisfaction! he looks on the crumbling walls, and *knows* that the glories of his ancestors are not mere fables. His wife while digging the potato garden, or whirring at her wheel, sings the cherished legends of his race; tells their triumphs and their oppressions to the children who tremble in rags at her knee; and dim prophecies of the future—when 'Ireland shall be herself again'—when Ireland shall belong to the Irish—when Tara's kings shall dispense 'justice to Ireland'—are repeated and listened to with avidity at every wake and fair; the

story-teller vies with the piper in attracting listeners; and grateful as they feel for *individual* kindnesses of the Saxon race, they look upon them in a body, as not only intruders, but oppressors."

"Surely, even-handed justice could prevent this," said Edward.

Mr. Graves smiled. "It would not be easy to persuade a man that you meant him justly, while you retained what he believed to be his."

"But consider the impossibility of upsetting a country, after centuries of undisturbed inheritance have passed," observed Edward.

"Of course," answered the Dean, "I know that; but fancy the impolicy of leaving a highly sensitive, and imaginative people to brood, with misery and want for their companions, over the wildly, but truly, chronicled tales of former greatness,—wrenched from them by force or fraud. If they had been drawn into active life; if they found their labour sufficiently productive to afford them subsistence; if efforts had been made to elevate, and not depress them, in the scale of humankind; such memories would have faded into fables, or have been in a great degree lost,—as they must be, where existing realities demand perpetual thought, instead of romancing over an old man's tale. We all seek something to cling to in this world—something to raise us above the tides and currents of life; the poor Englishman clings to his comforts; the poor Irishman might have done the same, *if he had had them to cling to;* but ragged, tattered, the shivering wreck of the past—his foot still on his native heath; the music of his native land ringing in his ears;

the history of his country graven on his heart ; those in whom he trusts whispering disquieting advice—the advice his restless, ardent, and faithful nature best loves to hear; the only marvel is, that instead of occasional outbursts—the festering indications of unhealthy constitutions—the disease has not been more universal and more deadly. Think, my dear Sir, of these things; think, as I have so often found it necessary to do, lest my heart should harden ; think, not so much of what, under the excitement and influence of dangerous men, the people do, as of what for a long series of years they have forborne to do."

The old man rose, excited both by his feelings and the subject, and extended his hand to Edward Spencer, while he added—

"I hope to meet you frequently hereafter; and, I trust you will, despite all untoward circumstances, remember what I have said."

The dawn of the shivering morning came at last, with the usual lull of wind, and the ringing of the bell, and the cold water cure applied to the narrow boards, and the scraping sound of the hard brush, the gruff voice of the captain perhaps, and the coiling or uncoiling of the ropes—those who are so unfortunate as to be awake on ship-board, seldom give a thought to the cruelty of waking the sleepers. The morning had changed to midday, and another afternoon had come before the opposite coast was reached. Few of our acquaintances among the passengers, however, cared to leave their berths, until the welcome news was conveyed below, that the steamboat was about to enter the Cork river—the

famous and beautiful river Lee. And beautiful indeed it is! Astonished and delighted was Edward Spencer, delighted past all telling; he had pictured a universal want of wood, but plantations sloped to the very water's edge. He looked from side to side, with increased emotion; he gazed around and around, and—cold as was his exterior, in heart and soul, Edward Spencer was a thorough enthusiast—in the fervour of the moment, he prayed earnestly that God would make him the means of good to the people with whom he was about to dwell. No selfish desire, no prejudice, no sectarian, or political bitterness marred the purity of this prayer, which, though unheard by human ear, was registered in Heaven, as one of the pure heart-offerings of an Englishman to the land of the Shamrock.

"Hurra for Ould Ireland!" exclaimed Betty, who having left her incumbrances below, ran on deck to breathe again the Irish air, "Hurra, my jewel; there ye are, my own darlin river, bright as a diamond and clear as crystal! Oh, wisha, wisha, God be praised, that I see ye once more"—and clasping her hands in ecstacy, she dropped down on her knees close to where Mr. Spencer stood. At any other time he would, perhaps, have smiled at her enthusiasm; but now he fully entered into it, and as Englishmen generally show their approbation by giving money, he placed half-a-guinea in her hand.

"Why, then, the Lord be good to yer honour!" she said, rising slowly, and glancing from the coin to the donor as she turned it over and over in her palm, "it's long since we saw the like o' that—and now, if there's any thing I can do to sarve yer honour, just say it;

and, faith, Betty Doyle 'll be the girl that 'll do it! I knew very well the PARTY yer nobility was of, when I saw the glance ye threw at that base, black-hearted turn-coat, that's tuning up the morning hymn below there (I pray the saints it may turn to a marrow-bone in his ugly throat). Whisht! there's the misthress; good bye, and God bless ye, Sir. Sure I'll be past Spencer Court before yer honor, and may be I won't give them the wind of the word as to yer honor's PARTY."

The man of no party was not sufficiently versed in Irish affairs to understand why a glance of his eye, directed to a person who was exceedingly disagreeable to him, should have identified him, even in the opinion of one of the lower orders, with a "party." He would have spoken to Lady Mary about it, but he knew she would laugh at him.

As they drew near the city, many of the ladies came on deck; and the kind, gentle-hearted sisters, who had been so attentive to the poor sick girl and her mother, immediately went to make inquiries, as to how they had passed the night—beneath a sort of rude tent constructed above them. A shawl had been laid lightly and carefully over the girl's face.

"I am sure," said the eldest of the two to the mother, "you must be very glad to be so near land."

The woman looked at her, but made no reply.

"We are almost arrived, and there are all the dear, ragged Paddies, watching, and cheering; do you not hear them?"

"I hear a bell," she answered, "a deep—deep toned

bell—it has been striking here these two hours," and she pressed her hands on her temples.

"Your daughter will get better," said the young lady, who was confused, if not alarmed, by the woman's manner, "she will be home soon."

"She *is* home—she *is* home!" she repeated, and withdrew the covering from her face. The sisters shrank back; the girl was dead—and the bereaved mother fell with a shriek, that answered the wild cheer from shore, upon the body of her child.

## CHAPTER III.

### THE TWO SIDES.

No matter how frankly and freely English people converse on ship-board, when they land, the intimacy is dissolved; they no longer know each other; or, if upon first meeting on *terra firma*—betrayed by a sudden impulse into an irregular act—they bow or even smile, they immediately draw back in a regretful sort of way, as if the reminiscence was any thing but a pleasure. They are as cautious in forming, as they are firm in keeping, friends. On the other hand, their mercurial brethren of the green island, become familiar at once, and joy in a new face, as the English do in an old one. The cold suspicion of English manners is peculiarly and painfully embarrassing to those who remain only a short time in the country; while the warm greeting of an Irishman, who, really, at the moment means all he says, is a more than "set-off" against the strangeness of things in general, and the small annoyances which people, accustomed to order and regularity, must perpetually encounter.

Edward Spencer had never before been in Cork; it

was his first visit to Ireland; and it was with no little anxiety he set out—the morning after his arrival—to investigate its "beauties." At that time, much more than at present, no gentleman could pass along without being followed, or, when he paused, surrounded by beggars—the quantity and quality of whose offensive rags were enough, without the wretchedness which sought shelter beneath the scanty covering, to excite a feeling of repugnance allied with that of pity, which no one who has not been in the country can at all comprehend. To Mr. Spencer, the scene was one of a most painful character; one for which he was unprepared. There was an utter hopelessness about the multitude of beggars—which made him shiver; he wondered how the denizens of the large and stately houses that rose on every side, could exist without—if not overcoming, at least lessening, and alleviating a system of wretchedness that seared his eyes and his heart. With their cries and supplications in his ears, and such a fell dance of misery and distortion, and skeleton existence around him, he could enjoy nothing. Idiots and the extremity of age—manhood and infancy—intreating for one halfpenny to save from starvation! During his brief pause upon the quay, he had seen droves of cattle on their way for embarkation; crates filled with eggs and poultry—all the evidences, in short, of surplus plenty; and as he marvelled that a hungry population suffered them to depart, he ran over in his mind the scenes he had witnessed abroad; his memory was distanced by the reality of Irish misery! The Lazzaroni, half buried in dreams beneath the

warmth of an Italian sky, were princes in comparison to those who, with ghastly faces and dimmed eyes, trembled in the humid atmosphere of the second Irish city. The wideness of the streets—the dignity of the public buildings—even the lovely faces and gay *toilets* of the ladies, who laughed and flirted as gracefully as if there were no beggars in existence—were unnoticed by Edward Spencer; the beggar wit, that flashed around him, seemed as though, in most cruel mockery, the arrows of death were tipped with diamonds; he could hardly believe his senses; there was a mad jesting too, from some of the suppliants at their own wretchedness, which made him weary, faint, and sick. Beggars at every door, at every window, blockading the passages, and howling to the cars and carriages—in most appalling destitution; a population of beings, created in God's own image—degraded—rendered absolutely loathsome, by the squalid poverty which engenders disease and despair; and who could find no refuge in those days, but the grave. He longed to regain his hotel, that he might think over what he had seen, so different from what his progress down the river had led him to expect; and he had nearly accomplished his purpose, when his rapid steps were arrested by Mrs. Hackett and her husband, who placed themselves so that he could not proceed without stepping into the rolling gutter, that marked the line of the *trottoir*. All blazing in feathers, and ringlets, and gold chains, and in a dress like Jacob's coat of many colours, the lady made a flourishing courtesy, and commenced proceedings.

"Delighted to meet you, Mr. Spencer, and welcome to the 'Emerald Isle,' as we call it. The counsellor lost no time in calling upon you, Sir, as the friend of that sweet creature—my old friend that I knew when she first stept out of long clothes. Such a picture of a babby she was!—Lady Mary O'Brien;—but you were early afoot, Sir."

"Yes—you were out—seeing the beauties," added 'the Counsellor,' eyeing a group of smiling girls; "seeing the beauties," he repeated, while Mrs. Hackett's face became of a deeper hue, and she muttered something, of which Edward Spencer only heard the words "dacent" and "chip of the ould block." The counsellor took no notice of this little "aside;" but, without further prelude, offered himself as "Cicerone" to show Mr. Spencer the "places,"—the "gaol," and the court-house, and institution, the latter of which he gravely affirmed was the finest school of oratory in Europe. Edward, sick at heart, for the wretched beggars had gathered round them, excused himself as he best could. He was fatigued; Mrs. Hackett assured him she had been the same "until she walked Patrick-street twice." He was not well. "Sure they could see Doctor Myles in a minute; the only raale doctor in Cork worth a farthing, and—one of themselves—who told stories like an angel, and could do as well for you after dinner as before it." He had letters to write. "If he'd only step to their house hard by, there were 'loads' of writing-paper, and 'lashins' of pens and ink, and he'd be quieter there."

This proposal was also declined, though less abruptly

than the others, for the offers, despite the tone and manner, were made with irresistible good-nature,—Mr. and Mrs. Hackett being always glad to see a stranger, especially one rich and well born; and that such was the case with Mr. Spencer, they had ascertained before they slept after the voyage. The beggars, too, had closed them in on every side; some blessing, others intreating alms, and others lifting up their sightless heads or shrivelled arms above the crowd.

"Is it telling them you've given them all the small coppers you had—you are—?" said the counsellor; "bedad they'll offer *you* change, and give it. Here, this is a good way to get rid of them, and a run for it: that is, if you object—as I fancy you look as if you did—to use your horsewhip"—and he flung a handful of halfpence into the middle of the street, which cleared the pavement at once; the poor creatures began scrambling, and scuffling, and howling for the coins, as wild beasts eager for their prey. This scene accorded so badly with Edward Spencer's feelings—there was something so repulsive in sporting with the misery, the utter wretchedness before him—that Mrs. Hackett saw, as she would have expressed it, "he was not up to the fun;" and, throwing as much tenderness as possible into her countenance, she said "Ah, then, I had all the pity in life for them myself, when first I came to Cork. They might have had my heart for the asking; but there's terrible imposture among them—as you'd find out soon—and to your cost, too—if you were to stop here long."

Mr. Spencer shook his head; the counsellor did

not understand his new acquaintance; his reserved, self-possessed, and almost haughty manner was particularly offensive to one who had fought his own way, not fairly and honourably, but by the lowest of law's tricks, and fancied he was seen through by every honest man who looked him, as Edward did, "straight in the face." Having none of the higher qualities of his profession, he made up for the deficiency by an extra quantity of keenness and cunning; was a great man among small attorneys, and very popular with the more discontented of his party.

Mr. Spencer rendered him exceedingly uncomfortable; and this was at once perceived by Mrs. Hackett, whose great ambition was for high company, while Counsellor David delighted in low. She was not, however, to be driven from her point. It would be a "grand thing" if Mr. Spencer of Spencer Court, eat his first "raale Cork dinner" in the house of Counsellor David Hackett. Great things might result to the family if that dinner was well managed; and, consequently, with a speech far more flourishing than her courtesy, she invited him for the next day, and her husband would have opened his tightly closed little gray eyes wider if he could, when she assured Mr. Spencer he should meet Lady Mary O'Brien. Much to her disappointment, he resisted even this temptation. Still she was not discomfited; but leaning on her husband's arm, who looked sullen and sulky, she walked by Mr. Spencer's side, endeavouring to amuse and interest him; and so prove her own usefulness.

"You'll be for buying Irish linen—I'll go bail;

encouraging the manufacture of the country. There, Pat Finnerty's the place for that; and you needn't bate him down above sixpence in the yard to get a raale bargain. A poor persecuted man he was—by the bitther Protestants ever since the trial;—only I'd be sorry to say much against them; I could if I liked;—and as to gloves, Cork's the place for gentlemen's, and Limerick for ladies' gloves. I'm sure the counsellor has gloves that would fit in a pigeon's egg;—think of that! yet strong enough for a fox-chase."

Mr. Spencer agreed that this was remarkable.

"And the glass-house, and the blowing," continued the lady. "Maybe you'd have time to see that, this morning; it's pure christal—as clear as a kitten's eye."

Mr. Spencer, although he declined, said he was glad to perceive that Mrs. Hackett was enthusiastic about Irish productions, and that he hoped to see the time when they would be valued as they deserved to be, at home and abroad.

This touched Mrs. Hackett's heart; for with all her faults and all her vulgarity, she loved her country as dearly as any woman ever did; and she bid God bless him for that, "any how," with fervour and truth, as they paused at the steps of the hotel.

Mr. Spencer invited them to enter.

"Is it me!" exclaimed Hackett, growing red, and looking furious. "I certainly *did* call on you, Sir, there, because, as Mrs. H. said, you were her friend's friend; but having paid the compliment—done myself the honour, I mean—I wash my hands out of the house altogether. No Irishman, Sir, knowing the

wrongs of his country, would pathronise that house!" and he shook his doubled hand toward the staircase with so anathematising an air, that the boards might have been supposed to tremble.

"Ah, Sir," sighed Mrs. Hackett, "you must excuse the counsellor's warmth. A public man, you know, must stick to his party—it's the only back a poor fellow has: and it's a grate thing for a professional man to have a *strong back*—which, the saints be praised, he has at this minute: as strong a back as any man in Cork—though I say it. There was many a little thing I wanted to speak to you about. Lady Mary is so backwards and forwards, abroad and at home, that she goes on never heeding, and laughing, all through her own heartiness. She was always mighty hearty in herself, God bless her; and, maybe, she never gave you a hint about—" she paused, and Mr. Spencer felt his colour mount to his temples.

"I really do not understand you," he said, and then Mrs. Hackett laid her puffy, dimpled hand upon his arm with a motherly sort of tenderness, and half whispered, looking pathetically in his face, "Maybe she never gave you a hint about them beautiful grass-green liveries."

"Now, really, Mrs. Hackett," observed her husband, "Mr. Spencer is more to be honoured for this. Why should he not publish an index to his politics, it is bold and brave, there can be no mistake about it. I hope none of us are ashamed of the green."

"But he may be murdered for it; and so may the poor boys who wear them, Counsellor Hackett," she replied.

"Sure it's to the north he's going, the bitter, black north; and through Dublin. And suppose they catch 'em in College Green on the 12th of July? Grass-green on the 12th, just under the statue of King William; or in dark Belfast, or bloody Derry! Think of that! Dear gentleman, he does not know them yet!"

Mr. Spencer was more perplexed than ever; but, although he shrunk from an inquiry, one fact impressed itself strongly upon him,—that he seemed, by some means unknown to himself, to have become identified with a party. So, after wishing the counsellor and his lady good morning, and thanking them for their kind attentions, and promising to call before he went to the country, he resolved, if Lady Mary had not left Cork, to entreat of her an explanation. So full was he of his peculiar situation, that he was absolutely startled, when after one or two gentle taps at the door, Mr. Richards bowed himself into the apartment.

"As," he said, "I hold a stewardship close to Spencer Court, and was about to journey there to-morrow, I thought I could bear some tidings for you to your house. I call mine a stewardship," he added, after a pause, with the most hideous mock humility, "seeing that we are all stewards to give an account of our stewardship."

The manner of the man was so exceedingly disagreeable to Mr. Spencer, that he was forced to guard himself most carefully lest he should say or look any thing rude, to one whom he grieved to hear avow himself his neighbour; so he made some trivial reply, and

paused, giving an opportunity to his visiter to speak, in which he evidently delighted.

"Your lot is cast in a benighted land, yet your abode is in one of the pleasantest places of the earth. Your uncle, Sir, meant well, but he was benighted—sadly benighted—led entirely by that dark vessel I saw you speaking with on the deck. A minister of our protesting church—a church protesting against the scarlet woman; yet he, its minister, holds communion —unto friendship—with the Babylonish priests and people. Though you come amongst us, Sir, with doubtful colours, surely you are in the faith?"

"I certainly am a Protestant," answered Mr. Spencer.

"I might have known it, Sir, by finding you at this hotel; it is a sad state of things for a country when we are obliged to stand so apart from the children of perdition, as not even to frequent the same houses, which ought to be of public, not exclusive, resort."

"And to whom, may I ask," said the young Englishman, looking his visiter steadily in the face, "to whom do you apply the term 'children of perdition?'"

"To the darkened offspring of Satan, Sin, and Death —the people of the Popish faith," he replied; and bitter and galling as were his words, they were delivered in the soft, honeyed brogue which had previously so disgusted Edward Spencer; opposite to whom he had hitherto sat, but after replying to this question, he arose, and walked pompously across the room, until he stood close to him.

"I have long," he said, "wrestled with the spirit because of this people, and sought almost in vain in the

dark south for some one to assist in the glorious reformation of the peasantry. What does it matter if they continue clothed in the rags of earth, so we can but rescue their precious souls !"

"I hope good may be effected in two ways," replied Mr. Spencer. "My plan would be first to provide them food and raiment by means of occupation, without inquiry as to their creed ; and though I would of course much rather they professed the faith I know to be the purest, I would let them preserve their own rather than *persecute them to its denial* with their lips, and—"

What Mr. Spencer was about to add, his visiter did not wait to learn, but interrupted him before his sentence was finished. "Stay, Sir—I entreat, Sir—I see you have already been tampered with," he said ; "you little know what you have to encounter—you cannot imagine what it is. Sir, I have lived among this benighted people, I have toiled for them, taught them, employed them, enlightened them, built schools, to which they would not send their children, and given them books, which their bigotry would not let them read, —prayed for them !—and yet, see here !" He threw open his coat, and from each waistcoat-pocket peeped forth a pistol. "This is necessary for me, and will be necessary for you, too ; in the present state of the country, every one who does not travel so armed will be shot—like a dog. I tell you, you don't know them. In the night, armed bands parade the country, and in our wild part of this unhappy land, every rock conceals a traitor. Now you look as if you had not faith in my words. Nothing is to be done but by the uprooting of their

accursed faith; and woe—woe—woe to those who turn back from the plough, or cease to wield the besom of destruction."

"I must really beg your pardon," said Mr. Spencer, not knowing how to consider his visiter, whether as sane or insane; "but I have many things to attend to; and in conclusion, can only entreat you to believe, that I am of NO PARTY, either in religion or politics. Is that so rare a thing?" he added, half laughing; for the change that passed over the face of Richards, expressing undisguised astonishment, was quite startling; "is that so rare a thing?"

"Poor young gentleman!" he exclaimed, in a tone of pity. "Ah dear! turning his back on the fold, abandoning the shepherd—I feared as much! I shall wrestle with the Lord for you, night and day; and just leave for your consideration—these—and these, and this little plan for the erection of one of our tabernacles in the wilderness. I grieve to see you blinded by false theories. Alas! alas! The late Mrs. Spencer, Sir, was an angel of Love. Seed, I fear me, sown in stoney ground," he added, when laying his fifth tract on the table. "Seed sown among thorns of the world and choking briars;" and down went a sixth.

Mr. Spencer took up one, and read its title; "An Exposure of the Idolatrous Blasphemies of the Church of Rome; proving the Mammon of its Spirit, and the Abominations of its Practice."

"A small thing of my own!" observed Mr. Richards, with a smile, meant for meekness. "One of my babes of grace, as it pleases Lady Lucy Knott to call them."

"And did you mean this tract for circulation among Roman Catholics?" inquired Mr. Spencer.

"Certainly; hundreds have been scattered on the highways."

"Where they remained, I'll answer for it," said Mr. Spencer, frankly. "Surely no one would feel inclined to read that which commenced by insulting, what of all else he respected most."

"The sword of the spirit shapes not its course according to the ways of the world," replied Abel Richards; "but I see you have been with the enemy; however, I shall pray for you; it is my duty, dear young gentleman. So like the family. Surely he will be yet in the fold!" then, having reserved, perhaps, the chief object of his visit to the end, he said, while he buttoned up his coat, "You have not fixed upon an agent, I think I heard. The land, Sir, is miserably under-let—it does the poor people harm to give them land at too low a rate; increases their careless habits; and there is no truth in them, Mr. Spencer—no truth; how can there be? Ah, popery—popery!—if you should require an agent, my knowledge of the country and its people are at your service; if not in any other way, as a friend."

Mr. Spencer could brook this no longer; he told Mr. Richards he intended to be his own agent, and rang the bell in a manner that admitted of no further parley.

It would be impossible to describe the varied changes of mind, or rather the various thoughts that passed through Mr. Spencer's mind during this eventful morning; and yet Lady Mary or Mr. Graves,—the old

clergyman who had interested him so much on board the steamer,—could have seen nothing to wonder at or speculate upon; they were, as all the Irish gentry are, used to the beggars; they had never seen the country or the town without them; and truly, but for them, the streets of many of the country towns would have been lonely enough. Mr. Spencer fancied every man and woman he saw without shoes was a beggar, and so exaggerated, if that indeed were possible, the extent of the misery which seemed to increase and multiply around him.

Every body, that is every Irish body, knew that the Hacketts were ignorant, illiterate people; low, and cunning, and bigoted in their way, as bitterly as Mr. Richards was in his. Mr. Spencer had "enjoyed," as Lady Mary O'Brien would certainly have called it, two rare specimens of the parties which have been worrying the kingdom of Ireland between them for the last two or three centuries; he had seen, face to face, two of the most inveterate samples of PARTY SPIRIT, and was grieved and shocked at the exhibition; but to those born in the cauldron this was nothing new; one party exalted the people into deities, the other depressed them into demons; this was only as it always had been; not, it is to be hoped, as it always will be! Mr. Spencer clung to the prospect of meeting speedily with the class inclined to steer the middle course; he had to learn, and bitter at last was the knowledge, that though there are many individuals who think and act justly towards their fellow-creatures, without reference to religion or politics, Ireland knew not,

in any respect, in those days, the blessings of a middle class—or the legislation of a middle course. It was difficult for an Englishman, born with both eyes open, to understand this. A car-driver endeavoured once to explain it thus: "A boy," he said, "can only sit on one side of a car!"

Edward Spencer—cool and quiet Edward Spencer—had a deep under-current of romance in his composition. Shrinking instinctively from every species of vulgarity, he felt a deep and earnest sympathy for the Irish peasant. He had read—written in letters of blood, which nothing but the sweep of an angel's wing can efface—the wrongs under which the Irish peasant has writhed and been crushed; the oppressions under which he has laboured and starved. The legends of the people; their music—a language which all the nations of the world understand—were familiar to him;—they were more—they were beloved by him.

Already more disappointed and perplexed than he cared to confess to himself, particularly after Mr. Graves' warning, Edward, his eyes fixed on the irregularities of the houses opposite his windows, began at last to fancy that green—"grass green"—which he had fixed upon to be his servants' liveries, while in Ireland, from the idea that being the *national* colour of the country it must be welcome everywhere, had caused him instead of being understood to be misunderstood. Mr. Spencer was not a popularity hunter; but this had occurred to him, at his own quiet dwelling in Berkshire, Ripley Hall, as a delicate way of evincing the interest he felt in the Irish; indeed, he had thought seriously

about having a harp or a shamrock on the button; his respect for his family crest forbade this, and he contented himself with arraying the footman and groom who accompanied him to Ireland in emerald green. He felt already that he had made a mistake, that green was only the national colour of Ireland, *out* of Ireland, and in Ireland the colour of one party; the substantial shebboleth; the palpable war cry, as it were. He rang the bell for the papers. The newspaper "of our side" was brought to him; he inquired for the other.

"What did yer honour plaze to say?" asked the waiter, a keen, ductile, sharp-witted fellow, as Irish waiters generally are.

Mr. Spencer repeated his request. The man shut the door and advanced close up to where he sat; then, raising his fingers to his lips in a low hissing tone, he pronounced the word "Whisht!"

"What do you mean?" asked Edward, amused at the mystery of the man's manner.

"Whisht, yer honour, or maybe it's the walls or the roof that 'ill fall about us. Sure if *that* was brought into this house every customer we have would quit; bedad, we darn't look at the same side of the street with it. Lord help yer innocence, Sir, do ye think that any of them *here* would look at both sides of the question?"

Mr. Spencer laughed, and the waiter turned to withdraw; but when he got as far as the door he crept steathily back, and coming closer than English habits would permit a waiter to come, he said, "Ye're an

honourable gentleman, and if ye would like (though it's aginst the rules of the house), I don't mind getting you one—on the sly."

This offer was of course rejected, much to the man's disappointment, and Mr. Spencer (who was obliged to wait for letters from the north) thought he would call and inquire if Lady Mary had left town as she intended. In the hope of escaping the beggars he hired an outside jaunting car, and—after the first five minutes, when the novelty was over of sitting on one slip of wood, while your feet dangle on another—he agreed in opinion with the driver, who, seeing he was a stranger, had taken the earliest opportunity of informing him, that "these cars bate the world and all for convaynience; for, in case of an accident, you are up and off in a minute."

On inquiring at the residence of Lady Mary O'Brien, he was informed she had gone with Mr. Graves and his daughters to Blarney.

"How long had Lady Mary been gone?"

"About three quarters of an hour."

"Then," said Mr. Spencer, "I will go there too; that is the famous castle?"

"Good luck to yer honour it is."

"But I must have another car."

"Why so, plaze yer honour?" inquired the carman, taking his *dudeen* from his mouth, and looking over his shoulder to where Mr. Spencer stood.

"Why, really my friend," he replied, "I do not think your horse is *able* to go so far."

She's the most *willing* baste upon Ireland's ground

this minit, Sir, and knows every fut of the way blindfold, and never axes to stop, barring a gintleman like yourself would insist upon it, just to wash her mouth as well as her master's."

"Yours!" said Mr. Spencer, while re-arranging the "bottle green cloak" on the seat, which, as he already found was any thing but a comfortable one.

"Ay, Sir, *the drop* comes as natural to my mouth as the water to hers. Don't think she can't go because she's rather thin; she's too much blood ever to make flesh—and run for the cup at 'the Curragh.'"

"She did not win it, though," said Mr. Spencer, glancing at the miserable-looking hack—trembling and starved—whom her master called "rather thin."

"We don't all win what we try for, this side of the water, any way," replied the carman.

"That's thrue Darby — put in the servant who stood at the door of Lady Mary O'Brien's lodgings, or it isn't there you'd be sitting now."

The driver gave a leer and a laugh—and, jerking his ragged "big coat" by the collar, flourished his whip in the air, preparatory to bringing it down with another flourish upon the galled back of the poor jade, who set off at as fast a canter as she could maintain on three legs—the fourth being useless for all purposes of active motion.

"Hurroo!" he exclaimed; "Hurroo! for the honour of ould Ireland and Blarney Castle!"

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE PRIEST OF THE OLD SCHOOL.

All along to the ascent called Sundays Well — a suburb of the "beautiful city" — the car-driver managed to push his poor starveling to a canter; but the rapid pace did not prevent his fare from observing, that miserable as were the beggars in the leading streets, those of the suburbs were still more so. In England, residing in an agricultural district, he had only seen poverty in what might be called its "pictorial form"— in the person of an aged widow receiving her weekly alms—or under the aspect of a group of rosy children, who, but that you were told so, would not have been imagined orphans. Sometimes a vagabond-looking fellow, dressed in an old checked shirt, a torn jacket, dirty trousers, bare feet, and a wide-leafed straw hat with a piece of black coarse ferreting dangling from it, crossed the young magistrate's path; and if he could not give an account of himself, was committed as a rogue under the vagrant act. Or some poachers apprehended by his neighbours' game-keepers—when

brought up for examination, pleaded poverty as an excuse. They had no cheese to their bread, and nothing to drink but water—so at least they said; and though they were punished, the poverty they talked of was alleviated; and if it was ascertained that they had actually been existing without meat once a day, the hamlet rang in sympathy with their privations.

Alas! alas! those who ran wolf-like, yet harmless, screaming after his car, seldom tasted animal food once a year. All they complained of was, that the old potato-crop was exhausted, and the new not yet come; and till it did, they must starve, "only for charity." In England, poverty, at that time more particularly, was so great a shame, that it hid its face, and wept; but in Ireland, it breasted the breeze, and howled in the sunshine.

"Drive on—faster—faster!" exclaimed Mr. Spencer. "I cannot bear this!"

When they were fairly away from the suburb and its hordes, and the yelp of the last dog sounded like an echo, the man ceased to ply the whip or jerk the rein. He brought his bullet-like head round, so as to perceive that "the gentleman" had placed his elbow on his knee, and covered his face with his hand. His keen blue eye glanced again and again; and yielding at last to the curiosity and loquacity of a nature at once the most inquisitive and the most secret, he resolved to speak.

"We've got a pretty bit of road forninst us now, yer honour; and it's not overspread much with those

dirty bits of cabins that do be *spiling* the look of the country on the quality."

"I cannot think that cottages spoil the look of the country," replied Edward; "surely some nice white cottages, with pretty little gardens, and one or two well-cropped fields to each, would add much to the beauty of that lovely river, and break to great advantage the formal outline of these young plantations."

Darby turned half round to see if the gentleman was in earnest, and then muttered "God bless him," with all his heart, adding: "I wish there were more of your honour's mind. White cabins!—flower-gardens! bedad! the only flower we ever look at is the blossom of the pratee! Oh, blessed Father!—one or two well-cropped fields!—it's long since I heard such a thing as that *evened* to a poor man; but to see it, is what I never expect. Is that the way it is where your honour comes from?"

"It is."

"Well—glory above!—think of that! And where's yer honour going afther ye see the castle and the curosities?"

"I am going back to Cork," replied Mr. Spencer, amused at a familiarity so perfectly new to him, but which was far from being rude.

"Oh, I know that, Sir; but ye'r not going to stop always in Cork, are ye?"

"No;—I am not."

"I ask your pardon, Sir; only one likes to know if the good have a mind to stop in the country with us; we rear enough of the other sort ourselves."

"I intend remaining in Ireland; but not in Cork," answered Edward.

"Och! murder! — the luck is laving the beautiful city altogether," sighed the driver. "I thought I might have the honour of being yer honour's coachman whenever ye wanted a car. There's a view, Sir; there's meadows and cattle; there's not finer cattle nor them in England, I'll go bail,—barring when we send them over. I brought ye the longest road on account of the beauty of the place; it's not as good as the Black Pool one, but there's the world and all of differ in the beauty."

The poor horse, who had been going at his own pace—any but a swift one—passed by a woman with a basket of eggs on her arm, and a heavy blue cloak hanging over a heap of potatoes, which she carried on her back; and then, by another, who offered Mr. Spencer chickens at twelve-pence a couple; and at last they were overtaken by a lame piper.

"God save you, Jack; where are you going?" inquired the talkative carman.

In reply, a whisper passed between the driver and the wandering musician.

"Jack says, plaze yer honour," said the carman, "that if ye've any love for music, he'll be happy to introduce you to the minstrelsey of Ireland. He'll sit this side, and play ye into Blarney, unless ye'd rather have him the same side as yerself, to get the strength of the pipes into yer head at once."

Mr. Spencer had a kindly and gentle dread of wounding any one's feelings. All his life he had found a

difficulty in saying "no," and anxious to observe Irish character of every grade, he consented to the proposal; only saying, he thought he should hear the music to more advantage if the piper sat behind him.

While the man hitched himself up behind, Darby observed that a blast of Jack Sullivan's pipes would shake the roof off a church—especially if he'd had three or four stiff tumblers of good punch.

Mr. Spencer was asked what tune he preferred, and naming "St. Patrick's day," the two men gave a positive yell of delight; while the driver, drawing up his horse with a jerk, which nearly brought it on its haunches, took off his hat, and pulling his forelock of shaggy hair, which seemed to hang down to be pulled, said,

"I hope I'm not making too free, but maybe it's yer honour that owns them two beautiful grass-green liveries that seemed so overtaken with the whisky this afternoon."

Mr. Spencer confessed that his livery was green, and this was received with a still louder hurroo, and followed by a jabbering in genuine Irish.

While Edward for the first time understood the nature of the "sea sickness," which the waiter at the hotel had assured him still "confined the poor fellows (his servants) to their beds, so that they hadn't a leg to stand on," he began to fancy there really was a spell over these liveries, which in some shape or other were perpetually conjured up before him. Beautiful as the country was, he could not enjoy it, so unsettled had his thoughts become. The piper played his best, the

carman stamped his feet—snapped his fingers—shouted "Success" and "Hurroo!" in time (as Edward supposed) to the birr, and wheeze, and groaning of the pipes, and ended by throwing the reins over the neck of the horse, leaving him to the exercise of his own judgment in all matters touching the journey, while he sprang into the road and performed a most characteristic and animated jig in the dust, covering the buckle—heeling and toeing—whirling his whip—hooping and jumping like a half maniac; at last exciting himself to the utmost, he threw his hat into the air—sent his "top coat" a summerset after it, and continued shaking his rags in the sunbeams, in the exuberance and animation inspired by the national tune, endeared to the rudest hearts, and so seldom appreciated by the high-born of the country; for "party tunes," are as marked in Ireland as "party colours!"

"Faith," said the piper, "you did that well; if his reverence saw you dance that hearty jig, there's nothing but his cloth would keep him off the floor."

"The kindness of his honour's words warmed me as much as your music, Jackey, my boy," replied Darby, while resuming his hat and coat. "Didn't the gentleman wish we had all white houses—and flower-knots—and cropped farms to live in, on the banks of the River Lee. And didn't he fling his money, God bless him, to the poor. And didn't he come to the country in grass-green, just to tache the tame nagurs not to be ashamed of the colour God put upon the hills and meadows. Well, it was a hearty jig, and has riz my heart out of the starvation; and now we'll foot it the

rest of the road, and Jack, you can get down at the turn off to the town,—that *was* a town in my father's time, of grate account, a wonderful market for woollen goods, and as many as thirteen mills going about it; they went so fast that they soon war gone, like every thing else that's good."

They met several peasants returning from the village to Cork, and exchanged, of course, kind greetings with them all. The inquiry was also made if there were many "down at the priest's," and at last one merry bare-legged girl answered, that his reverence was not *in it* at all, but up at the castle with some grate quality from Cork.

"Yer honour's in luck," said the carman, and having dismissed the piper, he urged his "fine hunter" into one of its extraordinary canters, towards the bridge

"Where no water flows."

Mr. Spencer, however, remembered the man's hint about "water" and "drop," and saying he would walk to the castle, told him to refresh himself and his beast, and come for him in an hour. This was gladly acceded to, and the Englishman found himself for the first time alone in the fresh and fair pastures of Ireland.

Above where he trod, the pennons of the rival houses of the Macarthy and the Fitzgerald had floated, and the onslaught and war-cry been echoed from the rocks and caverns of the frowning keep. In more recent times, those fair and peaceful fields were ploughed by the rude artillery of the Puritan chief—in Ireland

of most bitter, cruel, and accursed memory. Then, in the time of the second James, the fortress that had braved so nobly the cross-bow, the battering-ram, and the cannon, was degraded into a prison. Since then, its glory has been gradually decaying. Edward Spencer paused before he reached the bridge, to look upon the "war shaken" structure, scarred and hoary with feud and age, a monument gaunt and ghastly of those evil times when the might made the right. Although but the shadow of a structure of which the Macarthy might have been proud, it was a shadow that recalled the past. Antiquity had wreathed it in a shroud —washed away its scarlet stains—smoothed its rigidity into softness;—and the halls where the biting jest was answered by the as rapid sword, and where the harpers stirred hearts long since sleeping, to deeds of glory, or warmed them into love, are now so still that you can hear the wind of a swallow's wing, or the twitter of the martin; while the whistle of the blackbird from the "sweet rock close," pours into the ear a long-familiar melody. The jars, and jealousies, and party spirit of the morning, were all forgotten when Edward contemplated a ruin of which he had heard so much, but which now requires a knowledge of the past, to be appreciated as it deserves. He wandered into the "sweet rock close," being assured by a girl who was milking cows, and offered him some milk, that he would meet his reverence and the company somewhere about.

One of Mr. Spencer's favourite plans with regard to Ireland, was to revive the forests, planting trees

wherever they would grow; and he was exceedingly delighted to observe the immense size the evergreens had attained in this romantic wilderness. The afternoon was so sultry, that the shadow and coolness of the delicious retreat, refreshed both his mind and body. If he could have forgotten the beggars, he would have been perfectly happy. Indeed, when he heard the clear, light, musical voice of Lady Mary O'Brien responding to the full rolling brogue, so ripe and rich, that he was convinced it could proceed from none other than the good hearty Priest of Blarney, he seemed to have lost all memory of the past in present enjoyment.

His "fair foe," as he had frequently called her before she was married, when as a girl she visited his mother, now introduced him formally to Dean Graves and his daughters, and the venerable priest whom she designated as Father Jasper. As this was the first gentleman Edward Spencer had met of a class possessed of so much power and influence over his new country, even his desire to be near and hear every word that dropped from Lady Mary O'Brien's lips, did not prevent his observing the old priest closely. His face was rosy and jovial, not overgrown or sensual, as painters are too fond of representing churchmen; but fresh and fair withal. His eyes were bright, blue, sharp, and inquiring; his mouth was loosely and carelessly formed;—an imprudent mouth, speaking thoughts so freely, that Father Jasper never could have been a Jesuit. He took off his hat to permit the cool breeze to pass through his white hair, and then Edward did not wonder at his being

what he had heard he was, a man learned in antiquities, and of so charitable a disposition, that he never was able to keep a second coat to his back,—the organ of benevolence being only out-grown by that of veneration; while large "imagination," and two ugly lumps over his shaggy, restless eyebrows, indicated that minuteness of scrutiny in which people excel who are given to revive the dreams of the past, and make them realities of the present.

Father Jasper had been educated at St. Omer, and was fonder of introducing scraps of French into his conversation, than shreds and patches of Latin. But all he said and all he did bore reference to the glory of his native land. His genuine, earnest love of his country was quite beautiful to think of; no matter whether you believed what he told you or not, you must believe *in him;* he meant what he said—he firmly and truly thought that Ireland was formed on the model of Paradise, and was by no means inclined to hold in favour those who either neglected or insulted it. In one thing he was, indeed, a perfect Irishman: he never entertained the idea that to arrive at truth it was necessary to hear both sides of a question.

In theory, he would have annihilated every one who was not disposed to honour Ireland as he conceived she ought to be honoured; but in practice, he would live all his life on roots, rather than council the death of a chicken. He would attack the legislation of England towards Ireland, with an ardour and violence which even past cruelties and present neglects could hardly justify in such a man—denying, of course, that harsh measures

had been ever provoked; and yet every "Saxon" stranger who visited his beloved Castle of Blarney, was welcomed with genuine hospitality to his homely and abundant fare.

No one ever did the honours of ancient ruins like Father Jasper; and the legendary information to be gleaned from his rhapsodies, was so new and delightful, that the little party hung upon his words, following him down the Witches' Stairs—to the veritable Druid's Altar—to the entrance of the Prison and the Well—up the great staircase, and down again—over the verdant pastures, studded with noble trees—towards the lake, the margin of which was one blaze of gold from the blossoms of the yellow water-lily. Dean Graves and Father Jasper conversed with perfect harmony, the one enjoying the classic, while the other delighted in the antiquarian, lore of his companion. They quoted Irish, and Latin, and French, and "Moore's Melodies," beneath the shadow of one of Ireland's past glories.

"Is not that charming?" said Lady Mary to Edward Spencer, on whose arm she leaned; while Agnes and Elizabeth, the dean's graceful daughters, were gathering wild flowers. "Is not that charming—to see two leaders of such opposite faiths, conversing together and agreeing?"

"And why should they not?" said Edward; "and why always designate their separate creeds as *opposite?* Why not simply call them *different?*"

"Unfortunately, here they are so opposed, as to be termed *opposite*, with too much truth," was the reply; "and my right good old friends, although both of

liberal minds, would not care to be seen walking in the streets of Cork, in the close and friendly converse they are now enjoying in the groves of Blarney. I assure you, I have watched both one and the other, to avert the starting of topics that fiz and explode like bomb-shells, sometimes in the midst of most delightful and peaceful conversations. Of course, Father Jasper will ask you to dine with him to-day; and if you are fond of seeing national character, and do not dread losing your own, stay. But I warn you, if you do, you will be immediately identified with emancipators, if not with Whiteboys."

"And I *am* an emancipator," said Edward, firmly, and so loudly, that while the young ladies looked back and laughed, Lady Mary exclaimed,

"Hush; that is one of the quagmires which swallow up, just now, all friendly feeling. I am glad Father Jasper did not hear you, because his exultation might be painful to the dean; and I rejoice that your words did not reach the dean, because I want him to know you better, before you jar against his prejudices."

Edward called to mind at that moment the midnight conversation he had enjoyed with the old clergyman, and was sorely perplexed by the discrepancy: he might have known that the dean would speak more frankly to a Protestant and an Englishman, than he would venture to do, to a woman or a Roman Catholic.

"Both men love their country," she continued; "but their views upon some great national questions are so different, that until you have observed us more closely, you would perhaps say, that each loved *his party*, and

included in the broad word 'country,'—as too many do —only those who thought exactly as he did. One thing, Mr. Spencer, I would particularly recommend, though it seems an unnecessary warning to an Englishman,— do not commit yourself to *any party* more than you have already done."

"More than I have already done, dear Lady Mary!" he exclaimed; "how can I have committed myself, when I have not a single Irish party feeling. How?" he repeated, earnestly; but at the moment Father Jasper interrupted the reply.

"Look," he said, "at the margin of the lake. Do you see a tall, slender figure, with a long pole; there is a rake at one end of it, and a strong net at the other. Observe how earnestly he rakes the sedgy and matted borders. He has made a little raft of drift-wood, and sometimes may be seen steering it, from place to place."

"Is he fishing?" inquired the dean.

"He just is," said Father Jasper; "fishing for what's more wanted in this country than perch or tench— gold! We believe in these parts, that one of the Macarthys buried his plate and treasure in the lake, and that poor innocent creature often spends a week here, fishing for it. He's so harmless, that no one interrupts him; and he has such faith in some spell or charm he carries about him, that he goes into all spirit-places by moonbeam, or in the dark; fresh or fasting, no one harms him; and he'd tramp through the thick of the Whiteboys or of the yeomanry, without a 'Where go ye?' You might have seen his animal as you passed the gate. A Spanish ass, one which I believe your uncle,

Mr. Spencer, gave him; for he had great delight in Masther Mat, and the beast's furniture is a curiosity; a long backed spade and a rake, all manner and kinds of tools, and every penny he gets goes for them. I had a great dread of his coming here, at first, for those treasure-seekers are terrible fellows at rooting, not only about, but under, the venerable old walls; worse than the pigs, and, therefore, the greatest enemies antiquarians have in Ireland—except the road makers. Ah! the road makers! Lady Mary, they'd hammer every Ogham stone in the country into powder-pavement, if they had their own will and their own way. But, as I was saying, I was greatly in dread of him at first, until I entered into familiar discourse with him, and then I found he venerated the 'treasure tombs,' as he called them, and was careful and respectable in his ways and doings."

The priest went on to tell, how the man had been a schoolmaster, both in the North and South, following Mr. Spencer's late relatives from Donegall to Spencer Court; that he believed he was employed as a sort of tutor to some "young one" of the family—he had heard so; but after "the fever," he turned so light in his head, that he now wandered through the country, seeking treasure from amid the ruins of the past, or in those deep waters which neither ebb nor flow—the silent, sleepless lakes.

The subject of their observation had quitted his occupation, and was approaching towards them, his rake balanced on his shoulder. His dress was of ancient black, worn and patched—but it *was* patched; and

Edward Spencer rejoiced that the follower of *his* family had the propriety, however poor he might be, to mend his clothes. There was something peculiarly sweet and winning in his air and manner. Large gray eyes, so large as to occupy greater space than eyes are supposed to require, wandered, and then became fixed; and after looking deeply and searchingly for a time at some particular face or object, would wander away again, apparently without being at all enlightened by the scrutiny; the face was long; the nose, generally the defective feature in Irish physiognomy, was in this instance delicately, and even beautifully, formed; and the mouth, too, was small, and might have been handsome, but for an almost perpetual trembling of the lips.

"Salve, Domine!" said the priest to the schoolmaster, whom, when Edward saw him closely, he could not call old; for his dark chesnut hair fell abundantly around his throat, giving a peculiar, and rather distinguished air to the head.

"Salve," he replied, bowing to the priest and the ladies.

The good dean shook him by the hand; and leading him to Mr. Spencer, asked him if he had ever seen any one like that gentleman. His gaze, chill and meaningless as moonlight, was fixed upon Edward, and then removed to the face of Dean Graves.

"No," he said, "he never had."

"Are you quite sure, Domine? Look again."

"It may be that I have, a long time ago—a picture, I think, Miss Ellen showed me at Spencer Court."

"Well—yes. And can you not guess, Matthew?"

"No," he answered; "I always guess wrong, now; I cannot guess."

"It is the poor master's nephew, Mat, Mr. Edward Spencer, of England."

For an instant his face seemed convulsed; his lips trembled violently; then, falling on his knees, he burst into a loud fit of weeping, kissing the young man's hands with evidence of the deepest affection. Edward was greatly moved, he could hardly tell why; but it is truly delightful to obtain proof that those of our name and race, to whom we have succeeded, were honoured and beloved.

As the hour was already past at which the priest was to receive his guests, every endeavour short of personal violence, was used by the good Father Jasper to compel all his visiters to remain with him for the day; he set forth his fare with the hospitality of old times—there was a leg of mutton, the largest ever seen in Cork market, fit for the most delicate lady in Ireland "to pick;" and if that was too much there were trifles of chickens and pickled pork, wine, too, for the ladies, and such whiskey! a piper, and dinner laid piping hot by the time they'd get there. The dean and Lady Mary both resisted, but her ladyship again assured Edward he ought to go; such scenes, she told him, were almost over even in Ireland—there were few of the old priests to be met with now; and the rude but genuine hospitality was being fine-drawn in every direction, not to mention the destruction of friendly meetings by the increasing bitterness of party.

"Go," she repeated, "by all means, but do not com-

mit yourself to a party. I am very generous," she continued, "to tell you this of those with whom my sympathies so entirely go; but I would not have you trammeled in what I hope may be a long career of usefulness."

Mr. Spencer, who could not leave Cork until he received his expected letters, determined to take the lady's advice. And having obtained permission—most graciously accorded—to visit her the next day, he took Father Jasper's muscular arm and entered the village of Blarney.

There are few things in the actual world so touchingly beautiful as the respect and affection subsisting between the Roman Catholic priest and his flock; those who know and observe the people, cannot wonder at their strength and endurance; from the cradle to the grave the priest is the peasant's adviser and his friend; he knows all his concerns—not only the great business of his life, but its *minutiæ;* his private cares and sorrows, his faults and his *crimes*, are all in the priest's keeping; his judge, his advocate, his punisher, he is also his protector —very, very rarely his tyrant. Those who talk of the luxury of priests' fare now-a-days, and of its being drawn from the misery of the people, know little of his way of life; his narrow means, or the very limited number of his enjoyments. The pomp and circumstance of the Roman Catholic creed take hold of the Irishman's imagination; and the sympathy and kindness of his priest, win and keep his heart. When an ignorant Irish Roman Catholic becomes "bad to his priest," he must be utterly lost to good; for he holds no other faith, and has put aside all

that stands between him and destruction. Such, at least, things were five-and-twenty years ago!

A very brief notice of the hospitable priest's dinner—plentiful to profusion—may suffice. It was a sort of heart rehearsal of the scenes of the olden time; when the company was rudely, but plenteously, banqueted first, the vassals next, and the residue given to the palmers and pilgrims, the widows and orphans; who, though despoiled of much, felt there was no feasting, of which they did not, in a measure, partake. There were toasts—the first, "the king," "the only King of England who had entered Ireland without fire and sword;" upon this there was much cheering, and the piper, who was in the room, began to play "God save the king," but *modulated* it into "St. Patrick's day," after the third or fourth bar; then speeches were made, and toasts were given, amongst them the health of Mr. Spencer, proposed by Father Jasper himself, and in a way so touching, that Edward felt ashamed of his emotion. With clasped hands and glistening eyes the old priest prayed, that in the young Englishman now by his side the poor might ever find a friend; that all he asked of him was to see for himself, to think for himself, and to judge for himself;—all which, of course, Edward declared, in a reply which drew down "thunders of applause," he had come to the country determined to do. He was not aware that he had given utterance to any sentiments particularly liberal, and yet for every commonly just sentence there was a round of cheers; cheers, echoed by the servants at the door, and caught up and returned by the mob of carmen and beggars from below; for some moments

after he sat down this vehement applause continued, and he could not avoid expressing, to a gentleman on his right hand, who had been rather more quiet than his companions, his surprise at the enthusiasm that had followed his words.

"I am sure I said nothing that common justice would not demand," he observed.

"That's what has taken the rise out of them," answered the person to whom he spoke; "common justice is a most uncommon treat to us—what we don't look for nor expect. Common justice! upon my conscience after ye're twelve months in the country if you keep in the same mind, and are of the same mind with your words, you'll not wonder at an Irishman's enthusiasm, when you talk of doing him common justice."

Mr. Spencer did not relish the reply; but the song and the speech, and the steaming, boiling, scorching, animating, and most disturbing whiskey punch, circulated round and along, and across and over the table. As the evening advanced, the intellect and wit, the song, the jest, the repartee, and the bitter, desperate, and determined sarcasm that "scarified" without mercy, were each so great in their several ways, that Edward Spencer described the scene as drinking whiskey punch amid thunder and lightning. He never had a very distinct idea how he returned to his hotel that evening; he only remembered looking at the stars, and thinking they were all turned into shamrocks, and making a firm vow against whiskey punch the next morning, which he kept as religiously as the most temperate could desire in these, Heaven be thanked! more temperate days.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE RETROSPECT.

We must consign Edward Spencer to the delights and hospitalities of Cork; while—careless of the "disturbed state of the country," giving only slight credence to daily records of fearful outrages, but placing firm reliance on the fact that, under all circumstances, the stranger is safe, by day or by night, on the mountain side, in the deep valley, whether sentineled by soldier or Whiteboy—we journey to Spencer Court more rapidly than Betty Doyle, or the evil-thinking Abel Richards have done—although they have preceded us; and, on our way, entreat the reader to take a brief review of the past, that he may the better comprehend the bearings of the future.

Perhaps it has been borne in mind, that Spencer Court was inherited by Edward Spencer on the death of his father's eldest brother; his English property having been derived in right of his mother, who lived to see her only and much-beloved son of age; his father had captivated the heart of a young heiress at a ball in the

city of Bath, when Bath was in its zenith. He was called "handsome Spencer" until he was forty, and after that "Old Spencer;" for a free and careless life made him aged before his time, and he died ere he had completed his forty-sixth year; his wife, still in the possession of youth and wealth, when tempted again and again to enter the "holy bonds," looked grave, and shook her head; and being once pressed to marry a second time, by a lady who had urged her own example as a reason why she should do so, saying—

"I have had three husbands, and been happy with them all."

She answered, "But they were not Irishmen!"

This reply was differently construed by those who heard it; but, whatever meaning she intended her words to convey, she remained a widow, and wore widow's weeds until they were exchanged for the coffin and the shroud. Mr. Spencer, of Spencer Court, possessed a considerable quantity of land on the borders of Cork and Kerry; land of great extent, but, except in a few instances, of little value, running up mountains and down into bogs, alternately sedgy and stony, at one time covered with the snowy blossoms of the wild-rush, and at others exhibiting a sole surface of dark brown peat, and long ranges of unprofitable mountain, where, according to a common saying, "the Kerry cow will never look up at a passing stranger for fear she should miss the bite." There were, however, on this picturesque estate, within the folds of the hills, and hid away in the dells and valleys, patches of verdure and cultivation, the more delightful from being unexpected; and as Spencer Court commanded

good views of the magnificent mountains, of "the kingdom," it was a desirable residence for a country gentleman, who had no inclination to rack-rent his land, to interfere with the domestic laws and regulations of the "Whiteboys," or any other boys, as long as they let him alone—was fond of hunting, and duck and snipe shooting, had a taste for the "pictorial," and did not consider it too far to send to Kenmare or Killarney every week for his letters and newspapers.

Mr. Spencer, of Spencer Court, was thought as handsome, but not as fortunate, as his brother; by some purchase, or intermarriage in old times, he inherited a small estate in the North, and upon one of his visits to Derry, had been smitten by the charms of a young lady of Scottish descent, who soon became Mrs. Spencer; and, accompanied by her sister, and a favourite servant, Margery Myler, returned with her husband to Spencer Court, bringing with them, also, sundry habits of thrift and forethought that were any thing but popular in her southern home. In due time, however, the cabin-keepers, whether scattered through the glens, or pent up in wretched villages, which, for dirt and misery, when Mrs. Spencer first visited them, were more wretched than the kraals that travellers in the north of Europe picture with wondering disgust, became in a degree more comfortable, and the people better clothed. Mr. Spencer found them regular employment; and Mat—"Master Mat," a most efficient schoolmaster—educated the children; and that, too, in a particularly neat cottage, close to the porter's lodge, which, at the end of a "bohe reen," more than a mile distant from the high road, guarded the entrance to the avenue. There could be

no doubt of Mrs. Spencer's desire to serve all who came within the sphere of her active and acute mind; but many obstacles arose by degrees to impede her usefulness. First, she was disliked both by the peasantry and the gentry, because she was a northern, a Presbyterian, and the grand-daughter of a tradesman: then she disliked them, because they were southerns—the peasantry all Roman Catholics—the gentry "proud and stiff" churchgoers, without a "bawbee they could legally call their own, if their debts were paid." Neither party took much pains to conceal their opinion of the other; bad roads and long distances furnished sufficient excuses for nothing more than the occasional interchange of visits between the ladies of the neighbouring families; and Mr. Spencer being (for an Irishman) a very stick or stone as regarded every joy, except the joys of the field, and the more rare one, in those days, of seeing every cottier on his estate with a roof five feet above his head that would not let in rain, and a coat sound and without patch on Sundays, turned a deaf ear towards many of his lady's complaints; and, above all, towards her solicitations for the preferment of a young man, of the name of Richards, whom, by a considerable degree of pains and expense, she had at last drawn from the faith of his fathers. "Conversion" was, unfortunately, one of her schemes for the regeneration of her neighbourhood—before she had overcome the prejudice against "the blood of the black North"—before time was given to show the advantages which result from cleanliness and thrift, and many cottage improvements—she set about proselytizing; and thus ren-

dered the priest at once her enemy, and led the people to consider every thing she gave as a price set upon their souls :—unfortunately, Mrs. Spencer could not see, that according to his knowledge, the priest only did his duty by keeping together the flock committed to his charge ; she became as bitter against him as he was against her; and this unhappy feeling, retarding the progress of her ordinary plans, was increased by her sister's forming an attachment for a young man of the faith she so abhorred, and of those wild habits which, long after the commencement of the present century, unfortunately distinguished the " 'squirearchy" of Ireland. This person's name was the very general, but always respected one of Macarthy, and, careless and thoughtless though he was, he had some noble qualities, which, under other circumstances, might have formed a fine and useful character. Between him and Annie Cumming, it was said, a private marriage had been solemnised by a priest or friar of a neighbouring parish ; at least, there was too certain evidence that the gentle and much beloved woman ought to have been a wife ; and, as such, young Macarthy claimed her ; but Mrs. Spencer declared, that if there was a marriage, the difference of their religion rendered it null and void—that she would rather see her sister dishonoured in her grave, than the wife of a " Roman." The young man endured grievous insult and injury at Spencer Court, and Mrs. Spencer contrived to get her sister out of the country, without his being able to discover where she had been sent. This unfortunate circumstance increased Mrs. Spencer's unpopularity to such a degree, that her husband thought

it better to leave Spencer Court altogether for a time;—which they did—first going to England, and then to "the North."

Young Macarthy, disappointed in the affection that might have saved him, and goaded by the insults he received, ran a sad and rapid race of dissipation, and, some four years afterwards, lost his life in a smuggling affair at Skibereen, much to the relief of the Spencers, who never would have considered themselves safe in his immediate neighbourhood. Some said one thing, and some another, as to the fate of poor Annie Cumming. It was well known, however, that a son, to whom she had given birth, had been sent, an infant, to its father, who consigned it and its fortunes to the charge of his own mother—a woman rendered old by cares and disappointment, a widowed dweller in a dilapidated mountain house that had once been a residence suited to a lofty and powerful race. By her, however, the charge of the infant had been undertaken as a blessing, rather than a burden; a report was much credited that its mother had been compelled by her despotic sister to marry a burgher of Belfast, and that she had died a year or two afterwards; while many affirmed that she had entered a Portuguese convent, and was, for a number of years, "all as one as a saint" in Lisbon.

Irish improvements need perpetual refreshing, and, above all, PATIENCE—untiring patience and good temper. Mrs. Spencer imagined that her various changes would have continued just as if she had been on the spot; and, to get rid of her importunities, Mr. Spencer, who, as his years increased and his habits became more in-

dolent, would do or undo any thing to avoid trouble, at last consented that Abel Richards should act in a capacity half bailiff, half steward—which he himself called "agent,"—during an absence, certainly prolonged by Richards' representations of the state of the country and the bitterness and ingratitude of the people—needful for his own purposes.

Mrs. Spencer believed, all the time, that this man, so odious to the inhabitants—first, because of his change of faith, but also on account of his harshness and injustice—was working miracles among the "poor benighted people;" while, in reality, the only one, who, through evil report and good report, kept steadily on his course, was the quiet schoolmaster, instructing the urchins all day, even in the mysteries of Greek and Latin, which the Southerns prefer to English and writing, and turning a deaf ear to all Mr. Richards' injunctions to initiate them into one creed, while their parents professed another.

"I am, worthy Sir," he would say, "a teacher of the Vulgate—of the common domestic branches of geography, writing, the use of the globes, arithmetic, and chronology, and well-skilled to lead the mind of the tyro into the labyrinths of algebra, and the heights and depths of Greek and Latin; but, worthy steward, I am no divine; I can read the word of God in black letter and common type; but I am not competent to expound it, nor to raise my voice in prayer, even in a congregation of infants; and, as to your praying and lecturing in this house, appropriated to what is secular and not divine, I will have none

of it. There is Dean Graves on the right hand, and Mr. Duffy on the left; and if you want to teach what they, according to your thinking, cannot,—open wide your own door, and minister; here I am master, and master I will remain, until dispossessed by the worthies who placed me herein."

Richards would have been but too happy to dispossess the domine; but Dean Graves was his steady friend; and so, after a few ineffectual attempts, he left him as much alone as he could leave any one who was peaceably and quietly inclined,—greatly pleased when Matthew's annual visit to his own part of the world took away the reproach which a good man ever is to a bad one. At last, after an absence of between seven and eight years, much to the man Richards' dismay and astonishment, the Spencers returned to Spencer Court, bringing with them a little girl of about five years old, whom they called Ellen Macdonnel; this child, whom they said they had adopted, was treated kindly and affectionately by Mr. Spencer, to whom on wet days, and when there was no company, she was a plaything and a companion. Mrs. Spencer had become more ascetic than ever, more inveterate against Catholicity, and gave ready ear to all that Richards told her, of the ingratitude of those who had nothing to be grateful for; her originally kind nature, incrusted as it was by a frigid manner, became at perpetual war with her prejudices; where she saw distress, she could not avoid relieving it; and then, usually, had the reminder from Mr. Richards, that she was "fostering popery," while those whom she relieved were prevented from feeling as they

might have felt, by the reproaches she uttered against their religion.

Mr. Spencer's liberality of opinion unfortunately proceeded from what is by no means common in Ireland—a carelessness of both creeds, declaring in his "*convivial* hours" (as they are falsely called) that he considered both to be disturbers of the country, and one just as bad as the other. This was the fertile source of perpetual words, tears, reproaches, and storms, between the husband and wife, which they were sufficiently imprudent to permit the little Ellen to witness; while she, rendered still more observant by the absence of all childish sports, and loving Mr. Spencer more than she did his wife, imbibed much that she would have been better without. Mrs. Myler, the housekeeper, hated the child because of the trouble she gave her, and yet loved her for she could hardly tell what—a certain way she had of not only twining round, but growing into every body's heart; but Ellen Macdonnel's great companion and friend was Master Mat, the schoolmaster, who devoted two hours daily to teaching her "the Vulgate," its accompaniments, and Latin, and generally gave an additional hour to Irish—illustrated by the varied legends and tales which a brain like that of the domine, outrageously overgrown in the organ of imagination, could remember or devise; this was the only education provided for the little *protégée;* and yet she throve upon it; her large, wild blue eyes beamed with intelligence; and her playfellows—a ragged mountain pony, "vicious to others but gentle to her," and a huge dog, whom she carried in her arms when she came to Spencer Court, a

little curly puppy—could testify that they sooner tired of scampering over the hills and valleys than little Ellen. Sometimes Mrs. Spencer would say, that Ellen should be sent to Dublin to school; but this was speedily overruled by her husband, who declared he hated educated women, and must speak to Master Mat not to overburden her mind. The only thing he wished her to learn was music, and in this she promised to excel; Mrs. Graves, the dean's wife, agreeing to teach her the notes if she could come so far to learn them; which she did, twice a week, flying three miles across the mountains on her pony, followed by her dog, and sometimes by "a runner" to see her safe. A gleeful child she was, fearless of all harm, imbibing with the pure air she breathed a wild spirit of liberty—that dweller of the mountain and the crag—now stopping on the road to twine her hat with heather, or crown it with a plume of the wild foxglove, then diverging from the narrow path, to make her pony ford a stream, or leap a chasm, hallooing to the eagle that soared above her, and cantering after the fox, who had enough to do to escape from her bold, brave dog Brano; then letting the bridle drop on the shaggy neck of her rough pony, she would clasp her little hands and sing, as she went more slowly along, one of the melodies of her native land, with a sweetness and a fervour that would make the turf-cutter pause in his work and bless her as she passed; it was a strange progress to a music lesson—notes learned upon the piano to be practised on the guitar, the only instrument she possessed, although a piano was often talked about during her first year of study. Yet after a time she did so much with the tinkling

strings, that Mr. Spencer thought he liked the guitar better than any music in the world; but it was not only lessons in music that Ellen learned from her mountain rambles; she had hardly completed acquaintance with flats and sharps and bass and treble, when Mrs. Graves died; and though a period was put to her lessons, she still visited the glebe, for she was much beloved by the dean's daughters, who lent her books and music; thus her rides continued with almost as much regularity as during the life of Mrs. Graves. As she grew older her habits of observation strengthened; she knew every cottage, and the inmates of every cottage in the wild glens through which she rode; the ragged, half-naked children would watch, and hurra when they caught the first wave of her plumed hat, for Ellen usually had a little basket slung to her saddle, freighted, if not with halfpence, (which she used to coax from Mr. Spencer), with cold slim cakes, rolls of thin oaten bread, and, if the larder afforded nothing better, crusts and fragments of brown bread; if any one was ill Ellen was the certain conveyer of wine and medicine, and not unfrequently of such articles of clothing as were most needed, and which she used very little ceremony in appropriating for benevolent purposes. Visiting the poor in this way, seeing their wretchedness with the clear, bright, sympathising eyes of youth, observing their exceeding patience under affliction, knowing that Mr. Richards not only exaggerated, but falsified every statement he made to her protectors, finding the priest—whom she constantly heard execrated as "the minister of a false and besotting faith," "the enemy to his flock," "the destroyer of their souls," "the agent of sin,"—find-

ing this man constantly among the poor, seeing how he comforted, relieved, and advised them, and hearing the gentle, kindly words that fell from his lips, Ellen's power of comparison gained strength by exercise, and although she could not see far beneath the surface in either case, her natural dislike of Richards aroused still more the exercise of a faculty which else might have remained dormant; and her feminine generosity directed her to respond to the claim of the weak and helpless. Mrs. Spencer had been at this dangerous period of poor Ellen's life, almost continually absorbed in the more gloomy and contracted views of sectarian religion, and that nearly to the exclusion of every natural and generous thought and feeling. A slow and lingering disease, against which she had struggled for years, was gradually draining away the springs of life, *and she knew it;* between her sufferings and her abstraction Ellen might have continued to do as she had long been doing (except when for some particular act of self-will her rides were for a time abridged), that is to say, whatever she pleased, had she not one morning offended Mr. Richards past forgiveness by saying, and in a very determined tone, "That for all he said to the contrary, she thought Father Duffy had as good a chance of salvation as he had himself—if not a better."

Mr. Spencer, who was present when Ellen hazarded this speech, only laughed, and added, "That really he thought she was quite right."

Richards looked thunder, and took the very earliest opportunity of informing Mrs. Spencer of the opinion she had so fearlessly expressed; and of insinuating that

nothing but the interest he felt in the "sweet child," should force him to disturb the "angelic repose which diffused itself over the mind of such a suffering saint as Mrs. Spencer, but that he feared she (the child) was already contaminated by the scarlet pestilence of the Romish church, and the sooner she was secured within the fold the better."

This "securing within the fold" was accomplished by Ellen's pony having his shoes taken off and being sent to grass, by her being forbidden to pass the avenue gate unaccompanied by Mistress Myler, by her reading alone every day a portion of "The Book of Martyrs," and being questioned as to the heresies of the church of Rome every morning after breakfast. But this, bitter as it was, was not all; Ellen Macdonnel had learned that she was not a stranger, with no tie but that of charity to bind her to the master and mistress of Spencer Court. She had learned that she was really the daughter of that Annie Cumming, who was also the mother of a lad, older than herself,—a young, brave mountaineer, a Macarthy, with a proud eye, and a proud step, far prouder than her own; she believed her parents to be both dead; at times she writhed under the feeling that she was insulted, by not being acknowledged; she began to feel that she at least was *honestly* born, yet she had never called her mother's sister "aunt;" though treated as a relative, she had never been acknowledged as such; when in her mountain rides she made the acquaintance of young Macarthy, and drawn towards him at first by the mysterious bond of natural affection, which in youth is far more potent than in after years, she had once mentioned his zeal and acti-

vity in procuring her a young eagle—the poor bird's neck was cruelly wrung—and she was told that a word spoken of him or to him, would send her a homeless wanderer upon the world; for the first time, then, he was called her brother, coupled with so gross a distinction, that though Ellen hardly understood it, she thought, and inquired, till the whole truth was forced upon her mind. Though compelled to submit to the mandate of Mrs. Spencer, the opprobrium heaped upon an unoffending boy, and that boy HER BROTHER, her *mother's son*, however different his faith and training, seemed to her such hard injustice, that though she obeyed, she found many subtle ways of evading the command. She certainly did not speak of Lawrence Macarthy, but they sometimes met, both under a degree of fear and restraint, which only cemented their affection; for old Mrs. Macarthy, the boy's grandmother, was no churl of deep and bitter curses, against "the woman Spencer of Spencer Court," the "Presbyterian heretic," the "trading Saxon who dared to insult the blood and name of a Macarthy."

As the children advanced in years, their "bringing up" produced different results. Ellen became more thoughtful and refined; her feelings deepened; Lawrence grew more coarse; more daring; this change, from their meeting so seldom, was hardly known to themselves; and thus their affection remained undiminished.

At this period, Ellen's friend, the schoolmaster, was seized with a violent fever, and when he recovered, his mind was even more shattered than his body; it was the first winter that Ellen had been confined to the im-

mediate domain of Spencer Court; the little cabin children and their mothers were continually coming up from the glens and down from the mountains to know what ailed Miss Ellen, that they never saw her; and Richards, who could not endure the idea of any one enjoying what he had coveted, but never tasted, tortured their inquiries of genuine Irish good nature into evil spiritings—working through the "benighted cottagers."

It must be confessed that Ellen submitted to this restraint with a very bad grace; it was quite true she ought not to have been suffered to rove at will as she had done; but every thing at Spencer Court was either neglected or over done; at last confinement and vexation, and the working of an "I will and I won't" sort of nature paled poor Ellen's cheek, and made Mr. Spencer uneasy when he looked at her; he flew into one or two passions concerning want of exercise and sectarian bigotry, went out duck-shooting or hunting, and forgot the matter. But this system did not last for ever. One evening, when, with his legs stretched out before a blazing fire, the master of Spencer Court was thinking how like the plan of his estate in Donegall were the hills and hollows in the grate, and how much better whiskey punch was than punch of brandy, and deliberating whether he should stop at the third tumbler, or "mix" a fourth, Mistress Myler entered, curtesied down to the ground, advanced opposite to where he sat, and placing the tops of three fingers of the right hand upon the table, curtesied again—

"The madam, Sir," she said, and from the pleat of her snowy cap down to the tongue of her shoe buckle, Mistress Myler was precision itself—the most unpo-

pular of all qualities in the south; "the madam, Sir, is in a weak and wavering state this evening, and if it's your pleasure, Sir, she'd be happy to have a few minutes' interchange of sentiments with you."

"Very well, Peggy," replied her master, "I'll just mix half a tumbler, and go."

Mistress Myler looked at her master, and, advancing still nearer, urged him against delay, as "the madam was really ill."

"So she has been these three years," he replied.

"The master," she answered, "would do what he pleased; but the madam was all but speechless." Upon this, Mr. Spencer sprang up, to the great inconvenience of a cross Scotch terrier, who had been sleeping on the hearth, and who snapped so heartily at his leg, that he returned the compliment by as hearty a kick, and cursing it, in no gentle terms, for a "Scotch Presbyterian brute," hurried up-stairs. He looked for a moment on the convulsed features of one he had dearly loved, and, thoroughly roused to a sense of her danger, rushed down, directing an express to be sent off immediately for a physician, and another for Dean Graves; careless as he was of religious observances, when he feared the end was at hand he turned at once for aid to a minister of the gospel. Having given these brief directions, he returned to his wife's bedside. Ellen was kneeling there, weeping over a hand whose protection had at times pressed upon her with iron grasp; but she loved it at that moment more than she had ever done before; all her own petulance and wilfulness—her opposition and stubbornness—rose in judgment against

her; while all Mrs. Spencer's neglect and hardness was forgotten; the poor lady seemed unconscious of what was passing; once only, mingled with some half uttered texts of Scripture and snatches of hymns, she said, "Ellen—poor child!—no friend—no mother!" Mr. Spencer poured forth his assurances that Ellen should never want either—that he would provide for her. "Then do it," answered the dying woman, "*do it*, and don't talk—but *do it*—and at once." As she said these words, an old female servant entered, and whispered Mr. Spencer that the butler had gone off express for the doctor, but that the coachman and all the other "boys" having gone to a wedding hard by Glen Flesk, there was no "mankind" of any sort to go for Dean Graves. Mistress Myler suggested that Mr. Richards could pray; but Mr. Spencer roughly replied that, sooner than *that* should be done, he would pray himself.

"I will go," said Ellen; "I fear nothing, and there is nothing to fear."

In a few moments she had saddled one of the hunters, and was flying across the country, followed by her faithful dog, who whirled and sprang about in the moonlight, and could hardly keep pace with the speed of the gallant and docile horse, who heeded the young girl's weight no more than if a wild bird had rested on his shoulder. She was quickly on her homeward road, accompanied by the clergyman, whom she urged repeatedly to a more rapid pace than even his well-trained horse desired. They were now within sight of Spencer Court; several lights were gleaming like stars in the heavy pile of building which

loomed upon the landscape, its chimneys and gables standing out against the sky. Rapidly they descended into the valley; and the rush of the mountain stream they had to cross before they ascended the rising ground upon which Spencer Court stood, sounded like the murmurs of distant thunder; they could see the splash and foam of the water as it dashed—the unsleeping thing!—over its rocky bed.

"Do you know exactly where the ford is, Ellen?" inquired the dean, as he reined up his horse.

"Anyhow, Sir; follow Bran," she replied. Bran had taken the stream a little below where the clergyman paused; they could see this distinctly, for they were so close to the water, that the heated animal wanted to drink. Suddenly, however, the dog wheeled round and returned, and as suddenly sprang, all dripping as he was, upon the neck of Ellen's horse. The horse reared and plunged; the girl threw the dog off, and kept her seat.

Both the dean and Ellen urged their horses forward; but the animals would not stir a step; the light clouds that had been floating through the sky were so fleecy and transparent, that the stars sparkled amid their folds; one or two of a more sombre character occasionally passed across the moon; but the night was, on the whole, remarkably clear and calm; there were no large, heavy, drifting clouds to produce the shadows which so bewilder the eyes at night; and both the dean and Ellen could see the sheep grazing on the hill-side opposite. Still the horses, though evidently most willing to retrace the path they had descended, would not cross the ford, and

Bran shook and trembled by the side of his young mistress, who vainly endeavoured to rouse him, by exclaiming, "In, good dog, in!—forward, Brano!" It was of no use; neither horses nor dog would cross the ford. Suddenly their attention was called away from the animals, whose obstinacy at such a time was so distressing, by a clapping, as if of hands, on the opposite side. Ellen fixed herself more firmly in the saddle, and turned her face towards the dean, who sent a loud "halloo!" across the brawling stream; this was answered by a scream—loud and long—as of a woman in bitter trouble; it was, in fact, a "keen," a regular "ullagawn"—long and protracted—first loud, then dying away—then swelling loud again; and while they both gazed steadfastly towards the other side, they distinctly saw a woman, whose cloak floated behind her—not with the heaviness of cloth drapery, but light as a silken web—glide along the bank, to the spot where there was a natural fall of some depth; the fall was clearly visible from the mass of white foam that frothed and spun about in the moonlight, as the water went tossing in mad sport over the rocks. The figure paused, and again they heard the clapping of hands, although *then* it was more distant, and so faint, that instead of striking the ear, as it at first had done, they were obliged to listen for it.

Neither the dean nor Ellen spoke; but they felt their horses tremble beneath them; the sound ceased, or at least they heard it no longer; but the figure, instead of continuing its course along the bank of the river, stept, as it were, on the ledge of the fall,

and so glided—on—on—on—towards their side of the stream, amid the dashing of the spray, and the rolling and foaming of the fall—erect—firm—treading where no mortal foot could tread. As it thus passed, it became almost transparent—a mere shadow—tossing its spectral arms above its kerchiefed head; while ever and anon the wail and the shriek, fainter and still more faint, seemed fading upon the ear, as the mysterious form faded altogether from the eye.

The horses now dashed through the ford of their own will; but Ellen's momentary terror did not prevent her looking back. "Turn, Sir, turn!" she exclaimed, riding close up to Dean Graves—"turn! She is on the hill now, in the Macarthy pass, as they call it; and now—she is gone—hark! you can still hear the cry."

"An optical deception, Ellen," said the dean, drawing his breath heavily, as if a great weight was removed from off his bosom.

"No, no," answered the girl; "you know it was not *that*, Sir; you say that to prevent my being frightened; but we heard, as well as saw. I know what it is."

"You have imbibed wild notions, Ellen, among these mountains. You would persuade yourself it was a Banshee, wailing for poor Mrs. Spencer."

"I would *not*, Sir—I would not. None of *them* will wail for such new families; *they* know better than that; they will cry for the head of an ancient house, though he die beneath a roof of straw; but they offer no homage to the alien."

At any other time the dean would have asked her what she meant by "alien;" but, strange as it was, the

man was less composed than the girl. When they turned into the road leading more directly to Spencer Court, they met a traveller, buttoned up to the throat in a close riding-coat, plying a heavy whip on a lazy horse, too fat either to gallop, canter, or even trot. A youth, also mounted, but on a rough pony, rode by his side.

"Miss Ellen!" exclaimed the boy.

"What, Lawrence!" she answered.

"Mr. Duffy, I believe," said the dean, drawing up his horse.

"Ay, Sir!" was the reply. "I fear we are on the same mission to different houses. Poor Mrs. Macarthy, of the Inch, *isn't expected*—indeed I must ride hard to overtake her—so God speed you, Sir!"

"Good night!" answered the dean—"but," he added, "mind how you pass the ford."

"What ails it?" inquired the priest.

"Oh, nothing," said the dean, "but we found it difficult to get the horses over."

"An Ullagawn is gone up the hill," said Ellen, in a depressed tone, "which you will find it hard to overtake."

"God be between us and harm," muttered Father Duffy, crossing himself. The youth also murmured some words of the same kind, and performed the same ceremony. Then again they exchanged greetings, and urged their horses on in opposite directions.

Without further interruption the dean and Ellen arrived at Spencer Court.

"The misthress has made no fight at all against

death," said the woman, who, shading the candle with her hand, from "the blast of the door," attended to light them up-stairs. "She's been asking afther you, Miss, and I am sure the breath will not lave her till you're by her side. Oh!" continued the old creature, talking in a muttering tone to herself, as she sat down on "the head of the stairs"—after they had passed into the chamber of death—"Oh dear, sure it's wonderful how the rich, like her, lets their heart go waste, day afther day, day afther day, without loving any thing—at least without letting on they do; and then they're troubled at the latther end, and want to make up for it—but they don't get the time—and why would they, more than any body else? Wouldn't the prayers of the poor go before her—if she had 'em—and clear her path to Heaven? She'll have a grand funeral, I'll go bail—there'll be more people than prayers, and sorra a one will ever trouble her grave for the sake of the ashes—that's a sure thing. Whisht! I wouldn't say that's not Dinneen and the doctor. Och, hone! How many have died of the faver since harvest, without any doctoring but death; and the croak of the raven, or the wild crow, the only cry at their berring! Oh, wisha! but it's cowld comfort here—and cowld everywhere; death sends a shiver through the house; and though it's little good she did for any one lately—they say she wasn't always so. Sure myself hardly knows, and I from another part—the Lord have mercy on her! and God forgive me for the prayer. They'll be all *blind* by the time they get home from Gracey Flyn's wedding—grate luck they have—a wedding and a berring in

one week." She then took a pin out of her "bed-gown," and poked the candle-wick straight, saying, that if Misthress Myler came out, she'd fly at her like a tiger, for not sitting in the dark, as she herself would sit—betwixt death and the devil—to save an inch of light.

The crone—who was one of those innumerable hangers-on, to the destruction of thrift and good order, whom it would be much cheaper and happier for master and servants to pension than to keep—having "settled" the candle, pulled out her "decket of beads;" intermingling her appointed prayers with sundry observations as to the length of time "the misthress" was dying, and exclamations of astonishment as to the tardiness of Dinneen, the doctor, and those who had gone to the wedding. At last, Dean Graves almost forced Mr. Spencer from the room; and, through the half-opened door, came the sobs of Ellen Macdonnel, and the hysteric cries of Margaret Myler.

The crone crept into the chamber of death. Both Ellen and the housekeeper were kneeling by the bed-side.

"I've seen a poorer woman make a purtier corpse," muttered Katty; and then she cast a keen, quick glance round the room, and fixed her eyes on some brandy and water which had moistened lips that would soon be kissed by the red earth-worm. She crept like a cat to the table, and drank it off. "If that's quality wine, it's cowld—there's no spirit of the mountain in it," she thought; and then looked with more curiosity round the apartment. Mr. Spencer's purse lay on the table, and silver was scattered about where it had

been hastily and heedlessly thrown. Yet, though Katty could not withstand the temptation of the "drink," she felt no desire to touch the money, but laid her hand kindly and gently on Ellen's shoulder. "Rise up, Miss agra!" she said, "rise up, and the Lord will strengthen ye. Don't take on that-a-way, dear—nor don't murne; sure it's a blessin' to be taken before ye'r made to feel ye've lived too long, which fait some of us might do when we are born—with poor Ireland for a country. Oh! she'll have a grand wake, and a wonderful funeral; so take up yer heart, dear, and don't let the sorrow tramp it."

But still Ellen and Mistress Myler wept on, and the crone crept out as she had crept in, stealthily; looking back, she muttered, "To think of Peg Myler—I'm sure it's vinegar she's crying; but my heart aches for the poor young lady. Augh! she has a throubled look on her. God help us, and I've seen many a purtier corpse, with nothin' but God's curtain above it; but she'll be worth seeing when she's *laid out!* Augh! and the poor masther—he'll be twice as good now she's gone; and that's a hard saying of a woman!"

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE OLD PEOPLE.

In all situations, and under all circumstances, there is something terribly appalling in the aspect of death:—to look upon the fair young face robbed of the last tint of life—the rigid brow—the stiff unyielding fingers—the thrilling, "icy cold" of the beloved lips, so lately eloquent of music—of love—of life; and yet, blessed are they who die young; whom evil passions have not corrupted, nor evil thoughts defiled! Ah! there is much for which to be thankful, when we kneel by the young death-bed. Still, its silent, stern, rigid power is terrible; terrible even when we look beyond the grave—the one great certainty of existence! Death is fearful wherever met. However high they heap the pyre, however loud the cries, the dark vanquisher is there; though crumbled to the mouldering ashes which the lightest breeze may mingle with the air; scattering instantly and for ever, every vestige of humanity. The abandoned corpse left alone on the wild heath, or in the tangled and howling wood, if not devoured, perishing

by loathsome degrees; the rouged, and ornamented, and perfumed remains dressed for the funeral as if it were a feast! death—death—is the same with them all!

Though in modern times, all classes of mankind "bury their dead," in no country are the customs attendant upon the solemn rite so different, or so opposite as they are in Ireland; the Celt retaining much of the ancient formalities, mingling the old superstitions with the elaborate ceremonies of the Roman Catholic Church, while the Saxon retains the simple dignity which best accords with the reformed faith.

At the moment when Mrs. Spencer closed her eyes on this world, many of the adherents of the Macarthy were anxiously watching the arrival of Father Duffy, praying he might come in time to administer "the rites of the Church" to the dying mistress of the ancient walls, within whose enclosures the harp, the pipe, and the wild revelry of Irish hospitality had once held undisputed sway.

All that remained of the building, which had been very extensive, was a tall, narrow tower, and the lower portion of one side of what originally formed the square of the court-yard, the rude, but stately entrance to which had gone to decay; the arch had fallen, the marks of hinges and bolts alone telling where the gate had hung; the lower story of the remaining side was roofed in, and formed the kitchen and "servants' offices;" but the "Ould Madam," as she was called, could afford little money for service; yet she never wanted such rude assistance as the surrounding poor could render. There were always plenty of "neighbours," and "neighbours'

children," who held it "a labour of love" to run up to "the castle" to help the "Ould Madam" a bit, or rather to help Esther, the rheumatic and ague-stricken creature who had "followed" the family for more than forty years; the people, too, "cut her turf," planted and dug her potatoes, and performed the various acts of husbandry necessary to the cultivation of the few mountain acres left by confiscation and extravagance of the vast possessions which the solitary castle overlooked. Katherine Macarthy had never affected state; yet there was a formal bearing about her in the simple garb of widowhood, an instinctive stateliness, a halo of old memories around her gray head, and a native command in her deep blue, determined eyes, which bespoke a natural and conscious dignity that poverty had failed to subdue.

The ill-lighted, and inconvenient rooms of the tower, were considered as state chambers; the lower being her sitting-room. The rude, geometrical stone stairs led to the bedroom in which she awaited her final summons. The small apartments above were occupied by her grandson; one, as a sleeping-chamber, another, as a sort of oratory, inasmuch as it contained a crucifix, an altar-table, and some devotional books, to which a corner was given, where they were preserved in neatness and good order; but the walls were hung with old-fashioned implements of the chase; among which a long rifle, mounted and studded with silver, two curiously wrought pistols, a pair of beautiful spurs, and a *couteau-de-chasse*, were the most remarkable. A few books were carelessly piled on the

shelves of a carved, worm-eaten cabinet, surmounted by a flag staff, round which hung, or rather mouldered, the remains of what had been a richly-embroidered standard; the silk seemingly held together by the golden thread in which the harp-strings were worked, its less perishing nature preserving the form so dear to every Irish heart. The rough oak beams which composed the floor were furrowed by time. A chest of the same age and manufacture as the cabinet, and two equally venerable chairs, composed the furniture of the antique chamber, into which, through a long narrow window, the moonlight streamed.

The room was calculated to excite much sympathy with the past; and there would have been no evidence that gentle or juvenile feeling found a home therein, but that a cage, containing a little bird, hung within a deep embrasure of the wall. Even in that room, overlooking the valleys and passes of the district, once the territory of the Macarthy, the murmurs of those who waited and watched beneath might be heard, mingled with many a deep exclamation of sorrow and a half-stifled "Ullagawn," echoing the wild cry of the Banshee, which had terrified the dean and Ellen while on the road to Spencer Court. The chamber of the dying lady was like the apartment of her grandson, dedicated to gone-by and faded things; the lofty bed, from which depended the curtains, or rather the remains of tapestry, converted to that use; the coverlet, thin and modern, heavy enough for the sufferer who could hardly endure its pressure, yet flimsy and cold for winter; tattered carpets and broken chairs;—such were the chief "garnishings;" although a couple of

beautiful china bowls, and an engraved glass mounted in silver, stood on the dressing-table. The still living wreck of this ancient house, lay silent—gasping, not struggling; and yet, with a rigid defiance, refusing to yield to death the trembling homage, which Mrs. Spencer—the woman whom Katherine Macarthy most hated in the world—had already paid.

When the priest was announced, the dying woman revived. Her head and heart bent before the only earthly power she acknowledged; and though her spiritual director remained much longer than was expected—so long that the watchers without whispered to each other, that "The Madam must have felt it sore to make a clean breast, to say nothing of humbling the heart"—still, when her grandson was permitted to enter, she was sufficiently strong to speak, and to bless him with unusual earnestness and fondness; exhibiting towards the weeping youth, who knelt by the bedside of his only relative, greater tenderness during the last few minutes of her existence than she had shown since the time his insulted and impetuous father resigned him to her care; for much trouble had iced her nature, and her ordinary manner was not like the manners of her country. At first, she spoke coherently, but after a short time, her sentences came broken and wild, mingling the past and present. She spoke to Lawrence of his father—her own, only, brave, handsome boy, with sunshine in his eyes, and the spring of a mountain deer in his feet; of his high, pure blood, glowing through his fair skin, "like the red wine on snow;" HER son, the representative of a thousand princes—and then the tone

of exaltation sunk, and her face darkened with the darkness of a curse, and the words hissed forth from her lips; few, but bitter:—forgetting himself, she said, "he loved" the heretic and the stranger; he loved but he did not deceive her—he married her; remember *that;* yet, he was cast forth by the upstart; blown on by the north blast that withered our green fields—but *your* mother was *his* wife. He did great folly, but *no sin;* folly, to mix name and blood with those who had neither—but no sin. Stand before me, boy, that I may look upon the last—last—of our long race!" Her grandson stood as she desired; but she saw him not; the film of death was over her eyes, and she groped with her spectral hands until her fingers twisted in the long curls of his silken hair; then, disengaging them, she sighed bitterly, and said:

"I leave you nothing but our misery; purse, and house, and all, are empty. There is neither silver, nor gold, nor houses, nor land;—nothing remains to the Macarthy but the wide, cold, stranger world, and the blessings of a crushed and broken-hearted people. Kings and princes once—outlawed and insulted now." She raised herself suddenly, and extended her arm.

"Why was it, madam?—not good enough for your sister—ah! ah! ah! *Your* charities cover sins?—no—no—they are steeped in blood—mildewed with curses! I never said I'd forgive you! trample on us! because we are true to our faith, and dispute with *you* strangers, the sod of which *we* are made. Go, Lawrence, fill your purse elsewhere! Look, some become brawlers, who might be patriots—I thought to see your father a

patriot;—but go, take your father's rifle, my grandfather's sword, the old flag too, wrap *that* round your body, with the harp next your heart; so that, if the time comes, you are ready—!

"You all see how I die—a Macarthy!—all but nameless—here I sit—a poor, old, blind, dying woman;—but still," and her voice raised to the highest pitch of weakness, screamed forth again and again, "*still*—a Macarthy. Never forget your name—or your country, Lawrence—never!"

Those who listened without the half-open door—and the excited youth, whose tears dried as quickly as they were shed on his hot cheek—agreed that as she pronounced the last word "Never," the wild wail and clapping of hands—the cry of the Banshee, that weird and faithful follower who honours antiquity, the voice of lonely sympathy, filled the castle, and frightened the owls from their nestings in the ivy. The birds hooted and flapped against the window, and Lawrence rushed to look out into the court-yard, fancying at the moment, so loud and distinct was the "Ullagawn," that he might see the being who at the moment raised "the cry." Those who were without came in; old women—pale and trembling—while young girls fell on their knees and crossed themselves. The dying woman sunk back upon her pillow; the excitement, which had given to her countenance a terrible expression, faded from it; and though there was no resignation, a silent calm changed the expression, as by magic.

"I come!" she said, and the broken, but unsubdued spirit of the old chieftainess was gone! Then, indeed,

the wailing commenced within the tower—deep and bitter—the women shrieking and tearing their hair; but no shriek uttered by mortal lips, was like unto "the cry"—the agonised cry of the great mystery—believed in as faithfully as the records of Holy Writ!

An hour afterwards, Lawrence found himself in his chamber—alone—quite, quite alone—his wild spirit at fierce war with circumstances—his hot, high blood beating indignantly in every vein; with all the pride and all the achings after station, that belong of right to old descent; yet shut out by the then existing laws, from nearly every path that led to honourable distinction;—brought up like a young eagle by its parent bird, nurtured in the superstitions of a faith to which he clung the more closely, because of the contempt in which it was held by those whom—and with fair show of justice—he considered enemies.

The whole state of the country is much changed since then; but there were hundreds of youths in the mountain fastnesses and the wild valleys of Ireland, who felt as Lawrence felt; who, instructed only by the past, and with but limited knowledge of the influence of moral power, believed they had nothing to hope except from wild outbursts of violent resistance;—and whose nobler qualities were so obstructed in their growth, as to become deformities—even as the forest sapling that lacks head room, degenerates into the stunted and distorted underwood.

Various contending passions shook the mind of young Macarthy, before he had strength to sustain such agitation. The disgrace which the gentry affixed to his

birth, long festered in his mind; and though his grandmother's words reassured him, he well knew they would not assure others. For nearly an hour he paced his little chamber, his eyes sometimes resting upon the chest which contained the parchments and mouldering documents of his faded family's honours. His head full of hatred and revenge, against he could not define what, burning and beating; at last, such tears as frequently accompany the high resolve which God pours into the heart, in His own efficient and mysterious way, burst from his eyes; and the more he wept, the more the undefined feelings of revenge and violence were subdued. Deprived of his only relative, his young heart trembled while it turned towards his sister—not the child of his father, certainly—but the child of his mother; of that mother whom, wild boy though he was, he had seen in his dreams—wondering if Ellen resembled her. Then, when his tears were dried, and his heart was again hardened, the thought of Ellen, as the "young lady," the favourite and plaything of a luxurious house—cushioned in down — lapped at ease—nurtured in contempt of his education, and in hatred of his race and his religion—came upon him with frightful force; and her gentleness—her fervour — her pure, fresh, Irish enthusiasm (that bright and earnest evidence of a noble mind)—her sympathy with the poor, were all forgotten, and he whispered to himself, "Whether Mrs. Spencer lives or dies, Ellen cares not for me; she can be no sister to poverty such as this; no partner in a struggle for freedom—the gulph is fixed between us!" He little deemed, that at the very moment, Ellen would

have yielded up the stateliness of Spencer Court—the probable and the real—for one kind pressure of her brother's hand, one fond word from his proud lips.

Alas! they were not the only children born of the same bosom who have been estranged by the injustice of party spirit, or sternly divided by the blind zeal of what was intended not to sever, but to unite. Often had Lawrence turned over the deeds and parchments in the old carved chest, until he became familiar with their contents. But it needed not them to point out the ancient boundaries of the forfeited estates. The idea of leaving the old walls was accompanied by so bitter a pang, that he did not venture to think of it a second time. He was overwhelmed by his first great sorrow—it was the first time he had looked on death—and what a death it was, the death of the only relative he had ever known. One to whom the custom of the country had taught him to look with veneration ; a stern—revengeful woman; one, almost the last with national feelings, and national perfections; one who, if prosperous, would have been widely benevolent and generous to her friends; but whom adversity and wrong had rendered harsh and unforgiving.

Esther, in all the confusion, had not forgotten "her darling young master," and she brought him a lamp and some refreshment. The news that the Madam was dead, spread rapidly; and throughout the night peasants kept arriving within the court-yard, each woman raising the death cry before she dropped on her knees at the entrance to the castle. A crucifix hung at the head of the bed, and the corpse was decked with

the usual black ribbons—the flaring candles threw a disordered light upon features which, for the first time, seemed as placid as they were dignified. The priest had prayed, and the *ban caointhe*, or chief keener, had assumed her place beside the head of the bed.

She was one well-versed in the old history of the family; and if aught had been wanting to rouse the revengeful and evil passions of a young man, stung by a sense of poverty and degradation, it was the *ban caointhe's* lamentation and recapitulation of Saxon injury and Saxon hatred—into which no view but the one was permitted to enter; and which, appealing to prejudice and hatred only, was received as inspired truth by eager listeners. Even the men, who in general suffer the women to "keen" as long as they please without taking note of what they say, now listened attentively; and every time her voice sunk, there was a chorus of wrathful comments: "Wisha, hear to that now!" "Well! She knows all." "It's all true." "Boys, how do we ever stand it?" "To be put upon as we are!" "Well, glory be to God, we'll wait His time!"

Her "cry" contained allusions to the history of the family—and its leading chiefs for ages—without regard to dates; rudely, yet not unpoetically, strung together.

Commencing with the usual question, "Why did you die?" She framed her replies. "Why did you die? dark-haired daughter of kings. Why?

"Ask not again! What had *she* to keep her from those of her proud race, who are now suns in heaven? Only one bright child, the child of a Macarthy—of him

her only, only one—the young eagle—struck down by a poisoned arrow, with a broken heart! A curse on them that broke it! Only one young boy was left to the lady, whose hair, once as black as the raven's wing, is now soft and colourless as the white cloud upon the Reeks—one young boy! but his hands were weak, and his voice feeble. Ah, woe and wail! he could not keep the great soul from its sister spirits.

"Dark-haired daughter of kings; why did you leave your castle, the only castle where there still lived a Macarthy? Who now calls out the echoes of broad Iveragh? Who fishes the brimming waters of the Laune? Who dwells within the castle of Palice—the Caislean-va-carthy? Whose banner floats over the proud walls of Carrig-a-droid, which the Macarthy built in a single week to pleasure the fair lady of his love. Ah, woe and wail!

"The echoes of Iveragh will not repeat the Saxon name. The waters of the Laune are dark from the shadows of the thick trees; and salt, from the tears shed by the enslaved of her noble race. The Caislean-va-carthy, is wracked by the Saxon's breath; and the banner of Carrig-a-droid is the wing of the hoarse raven.

"Dark-haired daughter of kings, why did you leave your lands?

"Hark! how her spirit laughs. 'My lands!'—what lands? The child of a Macarthy—the widow of a Macarthy—the mother of a Macarthy—has no lands; they have taken and spoiled them! A few fields, such as her people would grant to a gallowglass, were all that

was left to the blood of Dermod Macarthy More, who sleeps at Innisfallen!

"Where are the lands of Carrigrohan? Where those of Cormac Laidir—the strong Macarthy, who built the castle of soft words, and the holy abbey of Kilcrea? Where the lands of him who set his foot on the neck of the Geraldine? of him who humbled the proud Desmond? the sound of whose voice could bring three thousand true-hearted men to the war cry, Macarthy aboo!

"Ah, woe and wail! are there no sons of that three thousand, ready and willing—now?

"Dark-haired daughter of kings! to count over the castles that bore your name, would be to count the sands of the wild sea-shore; to number those who paid you homage, would be numbering the blossoms of the wild rush upon the evergreen fields.

"Who wanted, when a Macarthy had bread? Who sorrowed, when a Macarthy could shield? Who suffered that the Macarthy did not avenge? The love of thy race was sweeter than honey. Thy maidens were fair and gentle—fleet and light of foot. Faithful wives and tender mothers—oh, woe and wail!

"They are still fair andgentle, but they are not fleet-footed to shun the famine and the fire; the starving child looks into the weeping eyes of the starving mother!

"The dark-haired daughter of kings had lived many days!

"She saw that the Saxon divided to destroy.

"She knew that his step was stealthy; that he poisoned the free springs; that he pinioned the eagle in his hen-coops, and fettered the red-deer in his sheep-folds.

That his heart turned away from the Celt; while his fingers grew to his sword. That he looked upon the mountains and the valleys and said, 'They are mine!' While his lips spoke peace, his breath kindled the fire in valley and highland. He held out his hand to the Madam; but she cursed the red palm; she scorned it, as became a Macarthy.

"Even in her last hour, a vision arose before the lady—a vision of the future; bright, with a green and purple glory. And a voice said, 'Live!' And the dark-haired daughter of kings said, 'Why?' And the voice said, 'Behold!' And the vision did not come from afar, nor from over the sea, but from our own land it arose—a vision of peace, of golden harvests, and lowing cows, of dancing and feasting; the harp, and the pipe, and the grass-green flag—the council of kings, and the music of a happy multitude.

"Ah, woe and wail! 'Such visions pass away,' said Katherine Macarthy; 'I close my eyes, and they come crowding round me, as I saw them in my young spring time: I open them, and they are gone—gone—gone!'"

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE TWO FUNERALS.

A FEW words more, and the history of the events which preceded Edward Spencer's arrival in Ireland will have closed.

Within the house of the Spencers, matters were conducted with the solemnity, the order, and the propriety befitting the obsequies of a Protestant lady; yet there was a regard to "form," varying in many respects from that which would have attended a death-bed in England. Much as Mrs. Spencer had been disliked, all who desired to be considered well-wishers of the family called to have a "last look at the mistress," and the kitchen and servants' hall were amply furnished with refreshments for the humbler classes. The coffin was never left without watchers, day or night, and poor Ellen found it difficult to steal in unperceived to renew the flowers, which, it is said, fade all the quicker from coming in contact with death. Invitations were not sent to any to attend the funeral, for absence would have been considered a mark of exceeding disrespect.

An abundant supply was, therefore, spread on the night previous to the last ceremony, in the reception rooms, because of the certainty that all Protestants within twenty miles—all the gentry and all the tenants—would assemble to pay their last tribute of respect to the dead.

It was considered a singular coincidence that the mistress of Spencer Court and "the Madam" should have died within so short a time of each other, and no two "gatherings" could be more different, though of the same people, than of those who met to offer civilities to Spencer Court, and the wild disorganised mountain crowd, which assembled in the court yard and around the "ruined castle," in every variety of misery which an Irish crowd can so terribly illustrate. At the latter, there were many well-mounted and respectably dressed farmers; their wives or daughters on a pillion behind them, the men gray coated, carrying heavy riding whips, the women shrouded in blue cloaks, and gay-coloured silk handkerchiefs tied over their caps instead of bonnets; others mounted on shaggy mountain horses, whose only halter was a hay band; others, and by far the greater number, on foot, crowding to get some portion of the homely food which was distributed as long as it lasted, or the still more sought for "bit" of tobacco, or glass of whiskey; indeed, the latter was by far the most popular refreshment as well as the most plentiful, for many a distiller of mountain dew had paid his tribute of honour to the memory of "the great Madam," by sending a keg, a gallon, or a few bottles of spirits to her wake. It was well known to the motley and excited

crowd, that the funeral of "the Madam" and the Mistress of Spencer Court were to take place on the same day, and about the same hour.

There is a superstition rife amongst the people, that if two funerals enter consecrated ground nearly at the same moment, whichever coffin is interred last, its inmate will be doomed to attend upon the inmate of the first, in purgatory; five and twenty years have swept away many of the old beliefs, but this still remains, and, at the time referred to, very dreadful contentions were not unfrequent, in consequence, amongst the followers of the silent dead. The Macarthys had mustered in large numbers to pay their last tribute of respect to one, whose trials and sorrows had greatly endeared her to the people; and the old subject of Annie Cumming and young Macarthy's love, and its destruction by Mrs. Spencer, was revived and talked over with much bitterness. The son of this ill-fated affection was the chief mourner at his grandmother's funeral; he was, as we have shown, a wild, high-spirited, unlettered boy, treading all too rapidly in the steps of his father's latter days. The Macarthy funeral had farther to go than that of Mrs. Spencer; but it was earlier on the road, followed by a long straggling multitude of people of Cork and Kerry, easily distinguished from each other by their very different physiognomies—the long, lean, dark faces of the Kerry men, contrasting with the round, nut-like head and thick, stubbed features of the natives of Cork county; but all intent upon doing honour to one of the "ould ancient families."

Mrs. Spencer's funeral was somewhat less than a

quarter of a mile from the place of interment when the mass of persons who followed the widow's remains, came in sight—heaving and tossing down the mountain, like the billows of a cataract after a night's storm. It is usual in Ireland for the poor to give place to the rich, in a manner which happily in England is but a tale of the feudal system; an Irish peasant too generally lacked the practice of standing erect in the presence of the wealthy who lorded it over him—exacting a serf's homage, without giving a baron's protection; but there were strong and turbulent, careless and dissatisfied persons in the mountain crowd, heated by much talk of by-gone days, inflamed by the ardent liquid (now happily one of the legends of the past), and urged to a service of danger by a superstitious belief, that it was a duty to save the immortal part of one of an honoured race from thraldom to one whom they had both feared and hated,—for Irish dislike is hatred!

There were still wilder men—strangers—beyond the influence of Spencer Court, who only wished to show their attachment to a faction by honouring the remains of one who had a double claim, herself a Macarthy, and wedded to a Macarthy, whose grandson was already remarkable for vigour and beauty, and despite the blot which Mrs. Spencer had sought to fix upon him, the offspring of her own sister; looking, moreover, able, and willing to dare and do, as his unhappy father had done before him.

Without further consideration, the resolve became general, that the Macarthy funeral should deposit its silent freight in holy ground before the arrival of the

other. The funeral from Spencer Court was preceded by a heavy hearse, moving along slowly and silently; while the coffin of the Macarthy, the shell containing literally the "remains" of a woman of delicate frame, was borne on six stout men's shoulders; the bearers paused for brief converse with the determined spirits of the party, and then rushed into what had at one time been the principal road, but was now a deserted high-way, leading in a direct line to the churchyard, while the stately hearse continued to move along the new line of road. As soon as the intention of the Macarthys was observed, the gentry and those who had quitted Spencer Court, became indignant at what they considered an insult offered to one of rank, and determined to prevent it; it was in vain that Dean Graves reminded them of the superstition which occasioned the increased speed and agitation of the mountaineers and glens-men—a superstition which had no influence over the minds of more enlightened men; it was in vain that several, more constitutionally cool, or more reasonable than others, urged how utterly undignified it would be to enter into a race with the "Whiteboys and Catarans" who composed the majority of the rushing crowd, forcing their way with ill-suppressed shouts of triumph; all was vain.

Mr. Richards, ever anxious to be a prominent object, was at that time remarkably thin and erect; he bestrode a gray gaunt horse of immense power, and was loud in his anathemas against those who would dare to insult the remains of his sainted lady, yet imploring them not to enter into collision with the children of perdition.

A few were for continuing their quiet order of going; but the majority would not "give in," and the horses of the hearse being urged into a most indecent gallop, the Spencer Court crowd rushed on with them,—some catching the exasperation of the moment, while others ran because others hurried forward. The "short cut" which the attendants on the Macarthy funeral had made, and their being unencumbered by stately trappings of woe, gave them the advantage in rapidity of movement, and notwithstanding that the funeral from Spencer Court had at one time been so much in advance of that from the mountain, the foremost of both parties rushed through the gate and over the walls into consecrated ground, almost at the same moment; but numerous as were the attendants at Mrs. Spencer's funeral, not one-half of them felt disposed to take part against their friends, and the friends of "an ould ancient family,"—such either slunk away from the gentry or kept behind the hearse, the other party occupying the holy ground, flourishing their shillalas, yelling, shouting, standing on the tombstones, clinging to the ivy that enwreathed the walls of the old church, and forming a fortress of determined and half-intoxicated men around those who were digging the grave amid the bones and broken coffins of an ancient race.

Many of the gentlemen rode in among the people, beating them down with their heavy riding-whips, and trampling them beneath their horses' feet; this was hardly resisted at first, though some of the peasants were engaged hand to hand at the time, particularly around the vault where the remains of Mrs. Spencer were

to be deposited, and where a party was endeavouring to make a passage for the coffin; but it was evident that there were many among the strangers who would not endure the blows—which the rich in those days were sufficiently apt to inflict upon the poor; they clutched their cla'alpines and looked "touch me if you dare," at the few who, well-mounted, struck they hardly cared when or where. If the widower had not been confined at Spencer Court by severe illness, his being so much beloved, and the sympathy always felt towards the sorrow that is before them, would have restrained the people; but the presence of Richards, hated and despised as he was, stirred them still more to wrath; and even if superstition had not urged them to secure the services of a proud presbyterian soul, for her who had departed in the more ancient faith of her house, they would have rejoiced at an opportunity of mortifying one who certainly deserved neither consideration nor forbearance at their hands. In the midst of the tumult Dean Graves rode up to where Father Duffy sat, upon his stout cob, waiting the result of the conflict; he raised his hat with the courtesy of a gentleman, and the priest returned it; "If you do not interfere, Father Duffy, there will be blood shed," said the dean.

"You can make your party wait, if you please," was the abrupt and uncourteous reply, "the Macarthys buried their dead in that church-yard before the sound of a Spencer's name was heard in the country."

"I cannot curb those men, Father Duffy, I have not the influence that you have, and you know it; I tell you,

blood will be shed unless you interfere. How dreadful it is that contention should enter into sacred ground—that we cannot bury our dead in peace."

"Then why did you suffer that base blood-hound," replied the priest, while he shook his whip at Richards, whose horse seemed inspired with the same evil spirit as its rider, and plunged violently among the people, "why did you suffer him to disgrace the funeral by attending it? the air is thick with curses on him; there—you may well say there will be blood shed, he has drawn a pistol—back boys—back—or you'll be murdered outright," exclaimed the priest, riding forward, and really alarmed, when it was too late; "back!" he exclaimed; and, then, in their native language, repeated his exhortation to them to disperse.

But Richards felt himself in danger—fierce eyes glared on him. He had been twice struck, and women as well as men were ready to hurl stones, plucked from newly-covered graves, at his head. He was an admirable horseman, sitting firm as a Centaur, although his horse plunged like a demon; the crowd pressed around him, yelling and hooting, and threatening, until at last he drew a pistol from his breast, and declared he would fire if they did not give way.

It would be impossible to describe the scene; those who had brought the coffin out of the hearse, were knocked down and trampled on; while dozens fought over the silent dead. Dean Graves, at the hazard of his own life, made his way among the people, to preserve the body from being crushed by the multitude. At this moment, a stone hurled from a distance, struck Richards

on the chest. The violence of the blow caused him to reel in his saddle, and those who had fallen back at sight of the pistol, now pressed on with a shout of triumph. It was short-lived however, for Richards fired. Instantly, there was a lull—a pause; every voice was hushed—every sound ceased; the mighty rolling of the mass was stilled—the very echo of the shot was heard, repeated in the mountains; and then came the buzz, and murmur—the deadened whisper that young Macarthy had been slain.

It was well for Richards that he trusted to the bottom and mettle of his horse; dashing through the crowd, he fled; leaving his friends to fight it out as they best could. There was an instant diversion in the people's object; some, intent on summary vengeance pursued the fugitive; others, remained firm to their first resolve. Again, the mighty noise of the multitude swelled; until it was echoed by the vaults and ruins of the holy pile. The Keen arose as if to knell another death; but the youth, whose fate excited all their sympathy and enthusiasm, sprang upon a head-stone, while the blood flowed from his arm, and entreated to be heard; although his voice was agitated and feeble, his appeal was successful. In a very few words, he thanked them for the love they bore a fallen house, said that he had seen his grandmother's coffin lowered into its grave, so *that* for which they contended was accomplished; that his hand was only grazed, and that though *he* should not forget who had given the wound, he hoped the friends of the Macarthy would disperse.

The Spencer Court party had had enough of this most

disgraceful contention; and though they still stood upon their right, which they conceived to have been grievously outraged, they were thoroughly disgusted by the violence and cowardice displayed by Richards. No further attempt was made to interrupt the interment of Mrs. Spencer's remains; the Roman Catholics quitting, as is usual, the churchyard, leaving the few Protestants to listen to the funeral service, and the simple and eloquent prayer pronounced by the clergyman; "that a better feeling might speedily be manifested in the land, and a spirit of divine charity and mutual love take the place of bitter hatred and fierce superstition." He went still further; he prayed that forbearance and patience might especially find place in the hearts of the little band now gathered round the last abode of their departed sister; that they might remember those who were now crowding over the mountains, flushed with triumph, and shouting forth their hatred of the 'new race,' were ignorant and uninstructed—the victims of long-standing prejudices; and rather ask, what cause they had given for the revival of such feelings, than employ their thoughts in devising means of vengeance and further injury.

While this prayer was uttered, the clergyman's eyes were raised to heaven; the events of the morning had shaken the good man's strength, and his voice faltered from its own earnestness. He did not see the indignant glances that flashed from eye to eye in his small congregation; nor perceive that more than one or two stood back, not wishing that oil should be poured upon the troubled waters.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE MIDDLEMAN.

THE funerals were long talked of, and the animosities they revived still longer felt, in the immediate neighbourhood of the scene. In isolated parts of a country, impressions linger like snow on the mountain-tops—impressions that would have been obliterated by the business or pleasures of active life. Abel Richards, who acted so conspicuous a part in the transaction we have recorded, had previously been making his way in the world after the fashion of the lowest reptiles; wriggling as a worm; burrowing as a mole; wise, in his own fashion, as a serpent; poisonous as an adder—the slime of evil deeds tracking his course. As a toad broods and fattens in its rocky bed, so did this man increase and prosper—the base ideal of a class which at one time eat into the very vitals of Irish prosperity—the exacting, the selfish, the merciless—the debasing and debased—middleman.

"But how," will the English reader ask, "how was this?—how could it be?"

How it was we can hardly explain, though we have heard and seen as much of the "MIDDLEMAN" as most persons; seen the character in all its various grades —from the broad, vulgar, pompous presumer who dared to talk of "his family," who had his thousand acres of the absentee landlord-in-chief, to whom he was a punctual paymaster, or advancer of monies, wrung from the thews and sinews of hard-handed men, the blood and bones of a willing people—from him down to the middleman, scarcely a remove in education or position from the poor vassals over whom he was a despot. It would be difficult to believe that any people but the Irish could so long have submitted to the middleman as "a system;" and alas! when they did attempt to rise against it, from its terrible and intricate ramifications, it involved them in entanglements of false-reasonings, false-judgings, and crimes, which have left an awful curse upon the country.

Take Abel Richards as a specimen of the class—and, believe us, there have been many worse; a keen, cunning man—a steward's son, inheriting his father's earnings and his mother's vices—crawling about "the big house" with a bland smile, a quick ear, a ready invention—a few pounds ever in his purse—to lend, when profit could be made—to buy, at every seizure for rent, either cow or pig, potato or kish, by which he could make a guinea, a shilling, or a penny—a bow and an obliging lie always at the service of his rich neighbour—a blow and a bite for his poor one. Not but that Abel shirked "the ruffian" whenever he

could, especially in his latter days; for he was not given to open strife—it did not answer his purpose. He knew that land—"the bit of land"—is the peasant's existence; he has, in nine cases out of ten, no regular employment to look to; he must have "the bit of land," no matter what he promises to pay for it; he must have it, or beg and starve; if ejected, he dare not seek for ground elsewhere, for if he eject another holder, his own doom is sealed. Richards knew this—he had grown up in the knowledge, and to the calculations which such knowledge brings; at first he got twenty or thirty acres of land into his possession, which he let, re-let, divided, subdivided, until it was said he made the district "a place of poverty and potato-gardens." Then he was only an under "middleman;"—the middleman of a middleman, who perhaps (the case was by no means rare) was a middleman under yet another middleman. The wretched beings who called him "Master Abel" (that was his *first* public step), were subject to have their pig, and their bed if they had one, "canted" by landlords —one, two, three, or more. But Abel never "got on swimmingly" until he became a convert—turned his back upon his old faith, and adopted a new, under the fostering patronage of Mrs. Spencer. This, for a time, gave him a push—a lift with the gentry. All the ill-will his avarice and cruelty had earned, it was very convenient to attribute to "his changed faith." He had been so hated previously, that we may doubt if his "turning coat" increased the ill-will; but he made people believe it did, and managed to obtain a considerable

augmentation of land from an absentee landholder, who had some zeal—and much need of the money, which Mister Richards did not fail to procure.

In due course he made some speeches at meetings in Dublin, which "told" with those who have a sufficient quantity of charity to "know" that all who believe as they believe must be saved, while those who believe otherwise, will be—the contrary. While Dean Graves, and other of his acquaintances received his confessions, and ejaculations, and tales of persecutions, with mistrust —in Dublin, he dined with titled ladies, learned to eat with a silver fork, obtained various presents of bitterly-worded tracts from those who had the reputation of sanctity among their own "set;" while more timid votaries bestowed on him blue and pink book-markers embroidered with words, which, strange to say, were at decided variance with their practice—thus a lady who would not suffer a "popish" domestic to enter her service, selected the motto, "Charity suffereth long and is kind;" and another, the simple word "Peace," worked in *orange* silk, as a token of her hatred of the *green*. At all the little "tea-parties" got up by this mistaken body, Abel Richards was introduced with much ceremony as, "that suffering saint from the south."

He returned to the neighbourhood of Spencer Court with added interest in the eyes of its mistress; for there are persons in the world, who, seeing others "get on," take it for granted they deserve to prosper. Abel's system, under his improved fortunes, was that of the higher grade of middleman—the agent between the necessities of one class,

and the necessities and vices of another. Sometimes he let two or three acres, or even one—never of course on lease; the tenant had to build his own dwelling; this in itself stamps the place in the poor cottier's affection —he has kneeded the clay with his hands and his spade; he has raised the stones; he has cut the sods; he has carried the wattles; and if his roof be straw, he and his wife and children have borne it—perhaps as a free gift from "a strong farmer"—on their shoulders, and wrought it into a shelter beneath which he is to spend, he hopes, his life. Few think of this natural love which all men have to the work of their own hands, when they read of an ejectment, and the consequences which follow; but Abel Richards knew it, and understood it—and knew its value, when it was to be turned to account. There are some who joy to see the harrow passing over the fresh-tilled field; to whom the husbandman's whistle is sweeter than that of the wild bird; who pause in the fresh pure air to bless God that He permits them to hear the music of hopeful hearts; and to see the seed cast into the earth—a type of immortality. But Abel Richards would bite his lips with bitterness at the labourer's whistle, and inveigle the tenant who could pay and wished to pay, into his debt, that so he might have power to raise his rent or cast him forth.

An act of this kind caused the return of Mr. Spencer, who, after his wife's death, had absented himself from Spencer Court, making Miss Ellen's education a pretext for the change he so much needed or desired, leaving many he had protected, to the mercy of evil-doers;—he was, however, active, when roused, and this roused

him for a time. A man who resided many years on the land of which Abel Richards got possession, and had hitherto paid his rent punctually, was induced by a manœuvre of the middleman to get into arrear. Watching his opportunity, while the man was in Cork, the agent levied a distress upon his goods, and seized for the rent. His wife resisted, and was committed for assault; it is true she was liberated in a few days, but she caught the fever in gaol, and communicated it to her husband, and two out of five of their children died of the pestilence. Next "gale" day the poor man was totally unable to meet his rent.

At this time, the potatoes in the pit outside the poor man's house were distrained on, and the bailiffs were watching to seize him for the costs of a lawsuit which Richards had drawn him into in the extremity of his distress; and knowing that Mr. Spencer had influence over Richards, who still acted as his agent, he wrote to him the particulars of his case, by the hand of Lawrence Macarthy. Time, however, passed on, and no answer came; for days and nights the poor man lay out amid the rocks of Glenflesk, and the fastnesses of the higher mountains.

Abel feared Mr. Spencer's return before his victim's ruin was thoroughly accomplished, and with the sagacity of a demon he laid a trap for the man. He caused a report to be circulated through the outlawed district, where he believed he was concealed, that his wife was dead; the man rushed home, was tracked by the bailiffs to his own house, but had time to bar the door—they dared not break in! But the middleman was not to be

baffled; he said to the bailiffs, "Starve them out; suffer neither bit nor sup to enter the house; he will not see his children die."

For three days they endured famine; on the first, they had a few cold potatoes; on the second, nothing; on the third, the children cried for food, and the mother looked in her husband's face. As the evening advanced, the door opened; the man, ghastly and desperate, stood armed with a pitchfork at the entrance; he said he would have food for his children, and the life of whoever touched him; the bailiffs (there were three), it might be they feared, it might be they pitied him, but they suffered him and his wife to drag some potatoes from the store. And when Abel heard it, he knew that NOW he could issue a criminal warrant against the man for stealing his own potatoes! He procured it; but its execution was prevented by Mr. Spencer's arrival. If ever Ellen Macdonnel was greeted as an angel, it was then; if ever she was cursed by a demon, it was then. It was well known that she had accelerated Mr. Spencer's return; it was believed that Lawrence Macarthy communicated with her on the subject. But the poor man was saved from ruin, while Abel blandly resigned all charge of Mr. Spencer's rents, declaring that however unworthy he believed the man to be, he was but too happy to oblige his old "patron," by proving that he bore him no ill-will for his obstinacy. But the man could not—and did not—forget his dead children!

After this occurrence it amazed many that Abel remained in the country; but, strange as it may seem,

he was countenanced by some who believed the people in array against him "for his new faith;" he was still the "suffering saint of the South," "labouring in an unproductive vineyard," sowing seed on stony-ground, and "among thorns."

It may seem marvellous to those who have happily never mingled with the *ultras* of either party, much less of both parties, in Ireland, how such a man could not only live, but proceed in a course of worldly prosperity—feared by some, useful to many; useful beyond all telling to those who required the utmost penny for their land—yet despised—hated—cursed!—while thieving, thriving!

In the evil days of which we write, such evil men were considered necessary to the thriftless absentee; necessary to the careless fox-hunting, claret-drinking squire, willing to pay a middleman for bearing the curses that ought to have fallen on himself.

And so Abel Richards went on—grasping together large sums at last; yet he would still enter the widow's cabin, and if she could not pay him the interest of the two or three pounds lent to her husband before his death, he would pocket the eggs laid on the dresser for market day, or take the hanks of yarn off the peg, or the basket of chickens from the eldest girl—not as a "set off" against principal or interest; oh, no, that would be mercy and justice, and Abel Richards knew neither; but as a present, a boon for his *forbearance!* and then as he mounted his horse he would fling them a tract and a "blessing." He never distrained an utterly poor man, where he could gain nothing by it. No;

cases of that kind he contrived should be witnesses to his patience and charity: but like a fiend, he would watch and wait and so despoil the tenant of every comfort—of his new hat, or his wife's shawl, or his little pig, or his hive of bees—whenever any such came: nothing was beyond or beneath, too high or too low for his grasp.

Mr. Spencer became after this, his last absence from Spencer Court, his own agent and his own steward; and though he lacked perseverance and energy, he was kind and conciliating—*just*, moreover, which is the last thing a poor Irishman expects. Ellen, whose mind was older than her years, was his almoner, and if it had not been for the necessary, though frequently injudicious, superintendence of Mrs. Myler, would have been as happy as any ungoverned young lady could have wished to be.

The kindness of Dean Graves, and the affection of his daughters preserved Ellen from being utterly spoiled. To Mr. Spencer, Ellen Macdonnel had grown from a plaything into a companion, riding, singing, reading, and reciting with him; and to him, as was most needed, she was in every respect a fond, a most affectionate, if not altogether a very obedient child.

During the five years that Mr. Spencer survived his wife, Ellen Macdonnel's clear full brow would have been seldom overcast, but for the love she bore her brother, who was never noticed by her protector. Master Mat had become so completely crazed, on the subject of concealed treasure, that he abandoned his teaching for wandering, and his pen for the pickaxe; and seldom approached the school-house for weeks

together; this was also a grief to her—her wise, her kind, her learned Domine! To be sure, she had free access to his small store of books, and they were generally speaking, such as a wild, enthusiastic girl should not have made her companions. Ellen, however, must be known as she really was—a creature of warm affections; a lover of all things appertaining to her native country, which she believed had suffered beneath long ages of misrule; earnest and hopeful; determined, rash, with a temper quick enough to be called "violent" by her foes, and "very warm" by her friends. Her position was still as undefined, as undetermined as ever. Some said one thing, some another. The neighbours had long discovered, that her bright chesnut hair was the colour that Mrs. Spencer's might have been in her youth; that her eyes—deep, violet eyes—resembled those of poor Annie Cumming; that her large, full brow, was like —nobody's; but her nose and chin, the "very moral" of one they did not care to name. Her figure was small, considering her years; more active than graceful; and her movements, at times, more rapid and decisive, than was in strict accordance with good breeding. But Ellen's greatest charm, was the varying and eloquent expression of her mobile features; clear or shadowed, tearful, or smiling, as circumstances touched her heart or excited her imagination. In her character, she was brightly and eminently truthful; not feeling her dependance, as an English girl would have done; because dependants swarmed around her, without considering it degradation, or being insulted in a poor country because of their poverty. And yet, "Nelly"

was proud as a princess; at times, exalted by the highest spirits, while at others, she sank into tears, and a despondence akin to despair. Her natural habits and disposition might have been moulded into mental beauty of the rarest kind;—for she was generous as upright, and brave as true; while her intense love of her country, exalted her character—as patriotism, apart from all worldly and personal considerations, must ever do.

Mr. Spencer continued to live undisturbed at Spencer Court—indifferent to rumours that occasionally reached him, of evil doings among the peasantry, far off or near at hand.

Still, the Whiteboy outbreaks were becoming more frequent, and assuming more organised and determined forms. Several gentlemen quitted the neighbourhood; but Mr. Spencer's want of energy and activity, increasing with his prolonged existence, was his principal safeguard; he became also more kindly and good-humoured, —attributable, and perhaps justly, to Ellen's influence; and shocked some of the high-pressure people, by a declaration that he was convinced the lower class were not evil movers; that he wondered how they had borne what they had borne, for so many years; that their endurance was exemplary, and that disturbance existed only amongst those who were not poverty-stricken. He muttered, also, something which sounded very like "rights of the people;" and hinted his opinion, that the representative of a certain ancient family had actually committed a breach of the peace by knocking down his own coachman. These were novel doctrines in those days. He had learned, moreover,

what things a landlord might do, and what things it would be much better for him to avoid. Some said his conduct proceeded from love of the people, others, that he feared for himself; and many wondered, that Mr. Graves permitted his daughters to companion so much with such a girl as Ellen Macdonnel, whom nobody knew, and who was little more or less than a young rebel.

But all Mr. Spencer's plans were suddenly overturned—crushed—extinguished, by a stroke of apoplexy, which terminated fatally in a few hours. A kindly man he was, without any of the higher or holier objects of our nature,—living an aimless life; yet his funeral was "mighty grand." His heir and nephew, being abroad, did not hear of his death for a considerable time after the last "palled pageant" had faded; and did not visit Ireland, as we know, until several months after the "melancholy event."

Some said, it was a great blot on the memory of the "Master of Spencer Court," that he had forgotten to provide for a child of his adoption, who had loved, and tended, and cherished him as a parent. His wife had bequeathed her to his care, and as he never spoke of his nephew Edward Spencer, and invariably treated "dear Nelly" as a daughter, and during the last months of his life, always mentioned her as "his niece;" many expected that the young, favoured, petted creature, would have been provided for; but at the last "poor Nelly" was forgotten,—left upon the world without a shilling!

## CHAPTER IX.

### "THE SICKNESS."

ABEL RICHARDS had long been a stranger at Spencer Court. Mrs. Myler, though ambitious of being considered "a saint," was of late somewhat averse to be reckoned one of *his* saints; and though she could perceive no harm in much that her late master and Miss Ellen condemned, she appeared to deem herself justified in hating one she had formerly upheld as a martyr. She manifested, therefore, some surprise when, a few days after Mr. Spencer's funeral, Mr. Richards, unannounced, entered her little parlour. Having offered a few words of condolence, he suddenly inquired for Miss Ellen.

"And what will come of the fine young lady now that her friend is gone? What will become of her now? she's too fine for her brother—and for service."

"Service!" repeated Mrs. Myler, looking spitefully over her spectacles at the place where Mr. Richards stood—for he had risen too high in the world to *sit* in a housekeeper's room. "Service!" she screamed forth again, after a pause, and her thin angular figure dilated

and trembled with bitter indignation, while her sharp purple nose assumed something of a warm crimson tone from the heat of her displeasure. "Service, Mr. Richards!—and what right, may I make bould to ask, have you, or the likes of you, to even mention service to Miss Ellen Macdonnel—or any thing else disparaging to her."

"Why, you say the master died without a will."

"Good, Sir!" answered Mistress Myler, drawing back her head with a jerk, while she touched the thumb of her left hand with the forefinger of her right, preparing to count his questions and her own replies.

"And what's to keep her?"

"I'd be sorry to make an old fellow-sarvint (as for all the ring on yer finger and a silver-gilt watch in yer fob, I must still count you, Mister Richards), I'd be sorry to make a fellow-sarvint and a fellow-sinner an ill answer—but what's that to you?" and she looked in a steady and determined manner into his face.

"Oh, it's nothing to me, certainly, but from old regard to the family."

"Ah, bathershin, Abel Richards! Regard! no wonder my head is gray, thinking of the wickedness of the world! Regard for the family, inagh! You forget all I know, and all I could tell, only I'd scorn it."

"Really, my good Mistress Myler, your present humour is most unaccountable, and I must say, unfitted for the time when you ought to bear a chastened and sobered spirit. I inquired after the young woman's welfare."

"Who do you call young woman?" interrupted

Mistress Myler. "I mind the time when you thought she pleased the poor misthress's fancy, that you'd go on your knees from this to Cork, to fetch her a rocking-horse—young woman, indeed!"

"I am sure, Margaret, I have heard you abuse her up and down, right and left, so that as the saying is, a black crow wouldn't look the road she went; and now you fly out like a turkey-cock at a civil question. But maybe the fatigue has taken effect upon you, my poor woman, and you're not quite yourself. I ought not to be angry, but remember your fallen state."

"I scorn yer insinuations, Sir!" retorted the angry housekeeper. "My lips never touched glass this blessed day, and my head's as clear as my heart's pure!"

"Misguided sinner!" interrupted Richards, extending his arm and throwing up his eyes.

"Look here," she exclaimed. "I own I have abused Miss Ellen, and good right I had—a young witch, driving the world through Heaven's windows — but what's that to any one? She was part of the house, and I had as good a right to fau't her, as I had the master or the mistress; but no one else shall *dare* to do it, when I'm to the fore; and as to what she has, or what she hasn't, it's no affair of any one's. She'll have enough that's honestly come by, not wrung out of the starvation of the poor, or moulded with the dying curses of hungry houseless sinners!"

"The benighted woman is gone mad," muttered Abel Richards, while his hands trembled so with anger that he could hardly button his coat.

"No!" answered Mistress Myler, "she is not—one

thing or another has brought her to her senses;" then she added with prophetic gravity, drawing herself up, "the country at this blessed moment is just like a kettle on the bile—a kettle that will bile away its strength into the fire, but in so doing *put out the fire that set it biling;* mind *that*, Abel Richards. One that stirs up the poor and ignorant, or those that are neither the one nor the other, into mischief, or puts stumbling blocks in the night time into a clear path:—the Lord forgive them their sins! and those who remove their neighbour's landmark—sure, *you'll* say 'Amen' when I say the Lord forgive *them* their sins? Well, good evening to you, my fine gentleman! it's getting late, and I don't blame you not to stay out after nightfall; Lawrence Macarthy's a fine young man now, with the mark of your shot on the third—the lucky—finger of his left hand; and the faction has a strong back and a long memory, and them ejectments are fresh in the people's heads. Well, God be praised! *we* have no occasion to draw a *boult* or hinder the early morning air coming in—the breath of God's blessing it is—by shutting the windows over night. The poor gentleman that's now in his grave—'Mrs. Myler,' says he, 'never heed the bolts; they never rob; if they've a mind to murder, bolts won't keep them out.' That was a true word; the life isn't worth having that the body must keep watch over to the destruction of its own peace. Oh, a good night, Sir; if the bell wasn't broke I'd ring for one to let you out; though the ways of the house aint unknown to you. I dare say the young gentleman will come over to look after things himself one of these days."

Richards waited no longer, but with an inward curse, which he cloaked beneath a blessing, stumbled his way down the stairs as he best could; starting only once, as the wind from one of Mistress Myler's favourite *open* windows agitated the cape of the riding cloak which Mr. Spencer would need no more.

Of all people in the world the Irish are least changed by the poverty of their superiors; there is much of instinctive chivalry in the natural character; a warm sympathy with the poor and unfortunate—ever bestowing that, if they have nothing else to give.

Ellen had never been treated with so much respect and affection by the servants at Spencer Court, as when she was believed to be friendless and penniless; the old butler laid the cloth and the best plate for her; the groom, who had many a time grumbled at her hard riding, assured her the horses wanted exercise; the gardener cut for her the few choice flowers that remained; and she provoked the wrath of Mrs. Myler, by steadily refusing the presents of eggs and poultry which her humble neighbours brought for her as free gifts. But the greatest change was in the old housekeeper's demeanour towards her, "Don't be downhearted, dear," she would say, "and let the past go. I tell you, when the master comes over, he'll find what I say is true; every thing, he said in his letter, is to remain as it is; so make yourself asy, dear."

Yet nothing could remove the weight from poor Ellen's heart. Whatever people might say, she found herself powerless, where for the last five years she had been powerful—craving for independence, yet shrinking

from obtaining it by any species of servitude, which in Ireland is always considered dependance. She knew a great deal, but nothing perfectly: natural talents she possessed to admiration; a voice of exceeding beauty and an ear of undeviating truth and purity, she had cultivated only as a means of amusement; Dean Graves and his daughters were away; so she had no counsellors. A deep and almost absorbing anxiety for her brother, as dear as he was dangerous, was mingled with her every thought; plans or projects, she had none. It was true the heir of Spencer Court had desired that all things might go on as usual until he was able to visit Ireland; but Ellen loathed the idea of an Englishman having power there, and resolved, go where she would, to leave the place before his arrival. These various and contending feelings wrought upon her to such a degree, that a violent illness was the consequence; so complicated and severe it was, that the housekeeper thought there would be another funeral; but this violent attack cemented more strongly the freshly developed love she bore the young and lonely girl; it was a drawing out of her nature, her Irish nature, that developed the sweetness concealed by the rough-coated nut. Ellen lay down on her bed of sickness a wild, rebellious-hearted girl, rebellious against God's will; but the woe and wearing of weeks, continuing into months, sobered and softened her; and when she began to recover her strength, it was to hear that not only starvation, but a fierce and pestilent fever was raging all around them. The winter had been bitter and severe, the spring wet

and dreary, the summer cold; the ever recurring trouble was rife—for the old potatoes were exhausted, the new ones not come in; discontent and disaffection prevailed, while scores were lying and dying of the pestilence. This state of things in a comparatively milder degree, was neither new nor uncommon; but previously, she had had the means of alleviating the misery which no individual fortune could remove. Now, she could do little but weep. Whatever feeling Mrs. Myler had (her position rendering her griping, while her nature inclined to kindness), seemed absorbed by Ellen; nor was it until two of the domestics of Spencer Court were seized and sacrificed by the "sickness," that the housekeeper awoke to its danger. "It was shocking," she said, "to have it coming like a wild baste into gentlemen's houses; all the fault of the quality not being there to keep it out."

When Ellen gained a little bodily strength, it would have needed more powerful authority than Mrs. Myler's to keep her from her old haunts; first she crept, tree by tree, along the lonely avenue, until she reached the gate-house; here a sheet steeped in lime and hung across the door, would have been a sufficient intimation not to enter, to any one who knew what fear of contagion was; but Ellen put it aside, and saw the living child on the breast of the dead mother; while the father was sitting, shivering and ghastly, beside "the hob" where the fire used to burn so brightly, his fingers expanded over the smouldering embers of the "powdery" turf, that here and there emitted a glaring spark, as the breeze from the door stirred the soft ashes. He

looked at, but did not know her, though he knew that death was his companion then—for groans of mental anguish, sterner and deeper than ever arose from mere pain, shook his frame even more strongly than the disease beneath which he was sinking. The child dropt its mother's breast, and looking up to Ellen, stretched out its arms towards her.

"I'll take it, Miss; the sickness is over me, so I can't have it," said the eldest girl, whom she had not previously perceived, and the pale creature staggered to the bed; "mother's quite dead now—quite dead: father, mother's gone—clean—clean gone from us. Oh, father! jewel! cry—cry, and it will ease yer heart. He's never shed a tear, Miss, since my brothers war buried." She placed the child across his arms, and wailed out, "Mother's gone—mother's gone."

This recalled the man; he strained the infant convulsively to his heart, turned his slow, meaningless gaze towards the bed, and uttered a scream, full of such ringing horror and despair, that Ellen covered her ears with her hands, and rushed out of the lodge. For some minutes she leaned against a pillar of the avenue gate. It is astonishing how rapidly things fall to decay in Ireland; seldom is a nail replaced, until the hinge drops off, or a stone put back, until the wall breaks down; Ellen was, therefore, hardly surprised when the hasp of the gate came off in her hand, and the remaining hinge hung on, in sulky indifference, by a single screw. The dog, half cur, half hound, who used to bark with such earnest vehemence if that gate were touched by any but his master and mistress, came out,—the shadow of his

former self; his long tail, uncurled and draggling, his bristles sticking out, and his eyes glazed. The animal stalked up to, and smelt at her feet and dress; then, raising up its gaunt head, uttered a sharp bark followed by a yell, so unlike his usual inquiring and insulting tones, that Ellen laid her hand on the head of her own stately dog, to prevent his displeasure from falling on the author of such unearthly sounds. The yell, mingled with the damp, chill air, which the rays of the sun failed to warm, seemed to ring in her ears after the creature had crept away within the sheet. Yet, as she looked through the bars, upon the green sloping fields,—the river brightening and dancing in the valley, while beyond, the effect of the light and clouds threw varied and ever changing tints upon the mountains,—her spirit recovered its elasticity; and a gush of thankfulness to God that she was again able to walk forth amid the beauty of her own land, cheered her, with a rapidity which only youth, and Irish youth, can know. She pushed open the gate, and after walking a few yards, entered the little court leading to the schoolhouse.

Weeds had grown up between the flint stones that paved the entrance—small, stubborn, rag weed, and the sappy, staring dandelion, the pushing, intrusive leaves of the rude nettle, and tufts of rank, spiry grass; the woodbine hung loosely and trailed from the broken trellice; and in the very cup of the waterspout, not too high for her hand to reach, a robin had built its nest. At the noise of raising the latch, four sturdy young birds looked down on her, poking out their heads, and ruffling and twisting in their habitation—as if undetermined

whether they should wage war with the intruder, or trust to their stout pinions and fly away. How damp the room felt! not close, however, for the opposite door leading into the little garden must have been open for some weeks; weeds had grown up around it—dark, tall weeds; a large yellow frog had been squatting on the hearth-stone, and with its stony eyes, and bloated sides, slouched heavily away as Ellen entered. Crickets were lying dead among turf ashes. The cupboard, where the boys ought to have kept their slates, but where Master Mat stored away his "eatables" in former days, and which had been full of little, fat, frisking mice, whom he could never bear to destroy, was open, and silent. The blackbird—the sweet song bird, that whistled his wandering master up many a morning at daybreak, had died of starvation; his yellow bill hanging over the broken blue tea-cup, that once contained its food. The long tables looked like spectres of fir and deal. The books—thumbed, worn, "Vosters," and "Goughs," and "Read-a-made-easys," with here and there a sly "Freeney's Adventures," "Valentine and Orson," or "The Adventures of Redmond O'Hanlon," more thumbed, more dirty than any of the others—were damp and mildewed; some piled up, others were scattered on the floor. Ellen walked into the kitchen, where Mr. Spencer had ordered that an old woman should live, to look after the house, and cook "the master's" simple meals; there, the desolation was greater than elsewhere. She called, "Molly—Molly Geary!" The spiders ran along their huge webs, or crouched in the

centre of the filmy architecture, astonished and terrified at the vibration of a human voice.

There was no other indication that her summons had been heard; with a heart sickened and fainting, as rapidly as it had been refreshed, Ellen passed into the garden. A boy was grubbing up a potato plot which had been already despoiled of the young growth of potatoes—hardly so big as hazel-nuts. He was devouring every one he could find; his rags hung on his skeleton limbs; he started, and would have run away, when he saw her; but she called the half-idiot child by his "nick-name," Hatty; and then he ran half crying, and crouching to her, like a whipped dog.

"Hatty, where is old Molly gone?"

"Purgatory," said the child.

"What, dead?"

"Ou, ay, long agone!"

"And where's James, Master Mat's little foreman?"

"Run away from de feaver; but dey say it overtuck him on de road to Cork—and he's dead; so dey say; and Hatty's glad. He hot me once—me! Hatty O'Driscoll wid de Skibeereen blood of de Reddy O'Driscoll in mee veins—and he only Jimmy White. Ah, death cot him!—hurroo!"

"Are—are there any more dead, Hatty?"

"Ou, ay, powers o' people—yet de food's none de plentyer! Ye look as if ye oughtn't to be alive yerself, Miss. Dead! Bedad dey're all dead—dey war starved first—and den de feaver. Timmy and little Anty, and Mary Moore, dey're dead; and Molly Bawn, and her sister Essy, and Jim Coyle—no, Jim's alive—and

Bobby Macheaffy—no, de breath's in him yet. I want his waistcoat, Miss Ellen; so I watches where he's lying, and give him a drink o' wather; but he can't last, and den, hurroo! Hatty 'll have de waistcoat!"

Sickened and disgusted, Ellen gave the boy some halfpence, and told him to go to Mrs. Courtney's shop, and buy a weight of potatoes, or some bread.

"Mrs. Courtney's funeral's just gone up de hill; but some one else will gi' me de bread—good luck to ye! White bread and sweet milk for Hatty O'Driscoll; hurroo, white bread and sweet milk for Hatty O'Driscoll!" and the creature, half fiend half fool, bounded away—his rags and long tangled hair shaking with every movement. Ellen looked around her, and could hardly credit the evidence of her senses. Mrs. Myler had withheld from her, with a kindly feeling, every thing she could that was of a painful nature; at last, she had become so accustomed to the disease and its results, that she ceased to think of its horrors, as horrors; and Ellen imagined that the starvation and fever of the miserably memorable year of 1821–2, were not worse than the starvations and fevers which, more or less, had visited the country on former occasions. A cold shivering crept through her frame as she observed the cabins, one by one, that were scattered through the glen, and saw how few signs of life were moving about them; the tell-tale smoke did not arise from more than two or three. About a dozen people were assembled round a door, waiting to attend one of their friends to his last home; poor spectral-looking creatures escaped for a little from the starvation which, if it continued much longer, must

overtake themselves. At the door of another cabin a woman was crouched, clapping her hands and keening violently, for Ellen heard the wail loading the air with sorrow. In several places, on the "sheltered side of the ditch," the crossing of poles, and outspreading of a coat or cloak, a patched quilt, or a blanket, showed that the wanderer, who had no home, had laid down there to recover, or to die, as it pleased God; those who feared to admit him into their own homes having done what they could to protect him from the weather.

Within sight, was the dwelling—half farm-house, half something better—of Abel Richards, surrounded by barns of various heights and proportions, built as they were required; stacks of grain, piles of turf, "duty turf;" and in the fields beyond, were potato pits, ridged out—all the elements of life, preserved untouched amid a starving people, who said that Abel had gone over to England for a while, in the time of famine, lest he might be induced to sell at a somewhat cheaper rate; not by any motive of humanity, but by—they hardly knew what. If any thing could have made Ellen arraign the justice of HIM, who *is* justice, it would have been the aspect of fatness and abundance of that bad man's homestead at such a time. Yet the man they hated they had scorned to rob. His barns continued full; his sheep fed untouched upon the mountains.

Ellen sunk upon the broken remains of a rustic seat, and burst into a violent flood of tears. She could not tell, and did not think, how long she had wept; but her attention was roused by the violent motions of

Bran, who sprang about in strong joy, at something which had given him pleasure.

She looked up, and saw the very person whom she most wished to see, and yet felt she ought most to avoid; one, whom though she tenderly loved, she had not of late approved:—it was Lawrence Macarthy.

"Ellen—dear Ellen! how is this—why, you are worse than I expected, the shadow of yourself!" he exclaimed, "No, this is no time to turn away from me, when death, and misery worse than death, is all about us. What have I done to merit this? and how," he added, passionately, "how can you be so weak, as to credit the false tales of lips to which truth is unknown?" Ellen continued weeping, but did not extend her hand to her brother; the young man, much moved by her evident distress, leaned upon his gun, and gazed on her in silence. He was not as old by several years as he appeared; for a habit of command over every thing but *self*, and constant exposure to sun and wind, had aged him much, so that Lawrence Macarthy, at two-and-twenty, looked at least four years older. His person had become a model of strength and beauty, so firm set, and active, yet withal so muscular, that few would have cared to try their powers with him in a wrestle for life or death. His carriage was remarkably free, erect, and careless, with an air of too much defiance to belong to a man of peaceable habits. His deep-set eyes might have been thought black; but they were gray, shaded by thick, and long eyelashes of such exceeding beauty, that they gave a softness, and at times, a sweetness to their expression

—such as might have become a woman better than a man; his eyebrows, were straight to severity; his brow was bold, broad, and massive; his nose, thick, and the nostril, proud and swelling; the upper lip, in general so grievous a mistake in our national physiognomy, was short and curved; but the mouth was large, and the muscles were loose and flexible—an eloquent, rather than a powerful or determined mouth; it was a mouth which you feared would hardly give forth in fitting language the high imaginings of a rich and fertile mind. The chin and mouth harmonised well; they were, if not sensual, at least lovers of pleasure. Mask the upper portion of the face, and you would conjecture that the lower belonged to a voluptuary; conceal the lower, and you had the index of a hero. At the button-hole of his dark green shooting-jacket, hung an old-fashioned silver whistle; his shot-belt, was fastened by a broad buckle of the same metal; and his powder-horn, richly mounted, glittered in the sun. It was evident, that Lawrence, as the glensmen said, "took pride out of his rifle." Like his other accoutrements, it was old-fashioned, and of foreign make; but it was bright and polished; the lock and mountings were of exquisite workmanship; the barrel was long, and smooth enough to joy the heart of a Red Indian.

We have written, that he *leaned* upon his gun; but he loved it too much to *lean* upon it; it rested on the ground, and he clasped it lovingly within his palms—as a treasure or a friend. There was nothing, save his natural bearing and these implements of the chase, to distinguish Lawrence Macarthy from the half class—

neither gentleman nor farmer; his shooting-jacket was worn threadbare, and the other portions of his dress were those of an ordinary peasant. Although always accompanied by one or two dogs, he was too proud to ask leave to shoot on any domain—taking the wild and distant mountains and lakes, as his sporting ground. And yet, more particularly during the preceding eighteen months or two years, the neighbouring gentry passed him with scarcely a recognition; he was as ready to return their haughty stare, as they were to bestow it. His want of popularity with the higher—the dominant class—was amply compensated by the devotion of the "Cottiers." Every houseless man, every homeless woman, every bare-legged boy, and ragged girl, blessed him; the very beggars, as he passed, let their outstretched hands drop by their sides, whispering, one to another, "Sure we'll not *let on*, it's begging we are, to *him*, for it would *scald his heart to have nothing* to give;" and instead of the usual imploring words, and more imploring tones, wished him "a fresh blessing," "a power of good luck," "the top of the morning," or some more deep and hearty prayer, in a voice as cheerful, as if they knew no sorrow; these greetings he failed not to return.

Ellen still continued to weep, and he to look at her, until, it might be, the sun shone too fiercely in his eyes; certainly tears gathered there, and (for he scorned them too much to wipe them away) hung upon the long lashes.

"I see how it is," he said, at last, "you believe all you hear against me, ay, and maybe, in your own mind add to it—"

Still Ellen Macdonnel made no answer.

"Isn't it enough to have starvation and contention abroad, without letting them force from every cup the small, small drop of sweetness, the sweetness of affection left us in this land of slavery?" he continued.

"God knows it is," murmured Ellen, "and God knows how bitterly I feel *that*—desolate as I am."

"Ay, Ellen, *that* is of a piece with every thing else that is done by the rich for the poor in our country; their charity is to use not to succour; that black-hearted, bigoted beggar, Richards, used to cast up his eyes and talk of his angel lady's charity in bringing up a cast-away. By—if I had been a man when he called you *that*, he should not have lived to say it again; and as it is, my debts to him are not yet discharged."

"Hush!" said Ellen, "there is too much death around us to talk of vengeance; the Lord has taken vengeance into his own hands."

"It has fallen on the innocent then," he said, with a fierce, proud look. "The rich have either fled the pestilence, or fortify themselves within their houses, doling out charity with hands palsied in returning pence, but active in taking pounds; like the cold, proud woman, whose funeral almost cost me my life. *Your* young, bright face was a sunbeam in her house, you went abroad among the poor, and came back laden with blessings that reflected upon her, and what did she do to one she was bound to cherish? She left you to her husband—and he—after letting you grow up a woman, the mistress of his house—leaves you to—Oh, Ellen! bitter is such nurture—accursed such protection."

"Stop, Lawrence," she exclaimed, "can *you* wonder that I will not hear you? It is many months since we met, you know how much I loved the only parents I have ever known, and yet you seem to think it will pleasure me to insult them in their graves. Oh, can you wonder, I again ask you—that I will not hear you?"

"A very little time ago, Ellen," he said, "and your mind was as free as my own; you rose, though not more than a child, against the bigotry and intolerance of that proud woman. You *saw* clearly—you *felt* keenly—you were all but saved—you loved your country, as an Irish woman ought to love it. I have seen your lips blush scarlet with indignation, when you cursed those invaders, heart and soul."

"Then God pardon me if I did, Lawrence. What right had I to curse—I, who have no power to bless! I do not love my country less than I did, but far more—my own sufferings have taught me more keenly to feel hers. When Mrs. Spencer lived, I own I rebelled against her bigotry and injustice; but surely, if men such as her husband possessed the land, we should have nothing to complain of."

"Hear this!" he exclaimed, with a bitter oath, "did I ever think to hear you say such wretched words as these? Have you forgotten what we have read together—the injuries and oppressions of centuries? Have you forgotten what we have seen—the rise of rents, the exaction of heretic tithes? Have you forgotten the infliction of martial law, and insurrection acts? Have you forgotten the tithe book? the Protestant grazier

paying nothing for the land that fattens his cattle for the English market; while the poor Catholic who raises five acres of corn—three for market and two for his own support—is obliged out of this to pay the priest and the minister? Have you forgotten Abel Richards and the *starving out?*"

"No, Lawrence," she answered. "Nor have I forgotten the good old man who saved the poor man's family; though I see *you* have forgotten that he and I are of the faith you would blacken and falsify." But he heeded her not—he was lashing himself into a fury, and Ellen was unable to quell the storm. He continued, "Even lately, when the sickness has been stalking through the country, the usual tithe has been enforced for the rotten potato; the tithe proctor and driver take advantage of the famine, bring up the rear of Almighty vengeance, and become in their own persons the last great scourge of the husbandman."

"Dean Graves has not done this," said Ellen, gently.

"Because he is afraid—"

"He is out of the country, why should he fear?"

"I tell you nothing but FEAR makes them human! Do I not know them all? and before long they shall have cause for fear. There's hardly a man—there *is* no true-hearted man in the South—who is not a WHITEBOY. Believe me, we shall have foreign help as well. Rouse, Ellen—rouse and work—as you once promised to do—our standard! the Harp—free to sound, with no crown to crush her full gush of melody; the motto!—the wreath of mingled laurel and shamrock. This fever, this famine, have roused those that have

been spared; and England, insulting our country, by soliciting food, begging it, for 'the starving Irish,' sending us back our own meal and potatoes, that never would have left our shores but for her base gold—sending them back to 'the starving Irish,' and then congratulating herself on her charity. Does a mother talk of *charity* when she feeds her child?"

"Lawrence!" said Ellen, anxious to divert his mind, and she looked steadily at the excited and panting man who stood before her. "Lawrence! there is something more than usual stirring, to excite you thus. What new project have you moved in?"

"It is not new, Ellen. When has it been new for the worm to turn?"

"Oh!" she answered, "if I could but see a chance of the independence of my country—a chance of her not only gaining but RETAINING independence—I would die to achieve it—die, to render it a country instead of a province; but the unavailing struggles of the past rise before me—the rapine, and murder, and distress, and perfidy, that have followed each successive struggle—the unworthy purposes which have actuated some, and the base gold by which others have been bought—the want of means—of training——"

The impatience of Lawrence Macarthy could brook no more, and he interrupted her—"None know better than you, Ellen, blind as you have been to the devotion of one who honoured you by his love, how ably he has trained, and how well he has provided means we never had before."

In a moment Ellen's cheek flushed.

"I know what HE says and thinks," she replied; "and I am certain he believes his own statements; but, as I told you before, and as I told him in the brief interviews when, ignorant alike of his political views and the feeling he most unfortunately entertained towards me, my dear uncle received him at Spencer Court, I told him then, that though he had motives, he had no means. One individual cannot organise a whole people; and the last time I saw you together, it seemed to me that hope was the only aid you had received from the stranger. They may hand the dagger to you; but when the time comes, they fail to draw the sword."

"Do you think if he was not certain of success, he would have abandoned his high position to organise us?" inquired Lawrence. "And you, who could have repaid him for this sacrifice, to turn as you have done."

Ellen made no reply but moved to depart. Lawrence seized her hand, she raised her eyes to his face.

"Peace, Lawrence!" said Ellen, with a firmness hardly to be expected from her past weakness, "peace! When last we met, we parted on this cause, and it will part us now."

"No, Ellen," said her brother, "but you should remember, it was love for you first drew him to this neighbourhood, and stirred his heart to abandon the service of the hard Saxon."

"I cannot judge of such quick caught love," she answered, with more calmness; "I tell you, there is no strength in him; love for me, if so you call it, could have moved to no such purpose; it was a wild, and per-

haps chivalrous nature, impatient of control, beating for some wild action and celebrity."

"You do him injustice, Ellen; you wrong his noble patriotism."

"Then God forgive me, if I do," she said, "for if I do, I wrong that which I honour most on earth. You, Lawrence, love the country; you see what it might be—but can never be; while your associates see nothing beyond their white shirts, and midnight plunder."

"Plunder!" he repeated, indignantly. "They never plunder, they only REVENGE."

"Revenge!" echoed a soft, musical voice, close to where Lawrence stood, "Revenge! Ay, Larry boy, it is a grand word to sound, and there is a fine line in Homer about it; ah! I dare say you never got into Homer; but, Larry, *two* you know can play at it; isn't that it? It is a blind thing, seeing no light; and rushing to destroy until it is destroyed; you murder me, and my faction murder you—God avenges, where vengeance is due; ah, boy! God avenges." And Matthew, the treasure-seeker, shook his head, while he repeated, "God avenges;" then turning, he addressed Ellen. "Miss Ellen, darling-avourneen, how pale ye are; are you sick a lana? sick or well, the blessing of yer masther, and the masther of us all be upon you! I've seen a deal, Master Lawrence, a deal of the vengeance of both sides, and that makes me pity both. I praise my Maker, I see good in Roman and Protestant, and Protestant and Roman, as well as in the antiquities of the earth. We were a great nation once—dears; as I can prove by coins and other curiosities; and we've had

a deal to put up with—a deal; and times don't mend—no, indeed they don't. No, times don't mend! At Macroom, the dead wait for the living in the streets, to be buried together; and there's no coffins for so many, and they clear them away, without minding. I'm glad to get back to the school for a while," he added, "though like every thing else, it's very lonely."

Ellen entreated her old preceptor to return with her to Spencer Court; to this he agreed, saying, he was charged with a message from the "new master;" and ready tears sprang to his eyes. "A message from the new master to Mistress Myler, saying he would soon be home—he called it '*home*,'" said Matthew, rubbing his hands, "he called it home; and he's of the right sort, no half-and-half; yes, Edward Spencer of Spencer Court's of the right sort; and not afraid of Whiteboy, or fever—but true. Now don't sneer, Lawrence—don't!—don't I say put that face upon yerself, it makes you look—"

"Say it out, Domine, it makes me look 'Devilish;' I feel as I look, and look what I feel—that's it. So the new slave-driver is in Cork, is he?"

"I saw him at Blarney, with the priest; and he dined with the priest; there's news for you, and news you'll like! and the boy who drove him told me, he as good as talked treason all the road; about wishing the people better houses, and the beauty of Ireland; and his servants in grass-green liveries—think of that. Sure no man but a friend to the boys would put his servants in grass-green these times."

"Any time," said Ellen, in a joyous tone.

"You're easy caught, poor bird!" observed Lawrence. "Wait till the midsummer gale comes due."

"Dean Graves is come over, too," said Matthew.

"And his daughters?" inquired Ellen, eagerly.

"Ay 'deed, are they, dear! and another whose sins were heavy enough to sink the ship."

"Abel Richards?" said Lawrence.

"'Deed ay, how well you guessed."

"We've had the sickness and the famine," observed Lawrence, "and now we'll have Abel Richards; the worst comes last. They say, he's to be the new agent."

"No, Mr. Spencer will be his own agent; I heard him say that myself," answered the schoolmaster.

"Ay, his own magistrate, to charge, commit, and try; his own grinder, his own bailiff, his own drover; who doubts it!" said Lawrence.

"I do," exclaimed Ellen. "Oh, Lawrence, if the heavy hand of sickness had weighed you down as it has me, you would show more mercy."

"Did you hear when Abel Richards comes down here?" inquired Lawrence.

"'Deed I did; he came at first as far as Macroom, and was forced to go back to Cork; the man at the inn daren't give him post horses; and the curses of the people fell so thick about him, to say nothing of the stones, that he galloped back faster than he came; they heard tell, I dare say, how he kept up the price of potatoes to the poor at the time he was fattening his pigs on the pick of all sorts, until they could tell the difference betwixt a cup and a red nosed kidney; but after all, they said, he'd get down to-night to meet the red coats to-morrow at Kenmare."

"Oh there's no doubt he'll be at his fine flourishing farm to-night," said Lawrence. "No doubt of it; it's a pleasant prospect, a great delight, Ellen, to the people who are starving—those the fever has left—to know of the wine that's stowed in his cellars, and the meat that putrifies in his tubs, and to look at the potato pits chock full, and the stacked grain! And to me, it's a fine thing for me to stand here and remember that every inch of the land we look on, ought to be mine; and yet to know, that I couldn't cross a horse of higher value than five pounds, but Master Abel Richards, by virtue of his turned coat, could take it from me!" The young man's eyes flashed as he spoke, and his voice was so loud, that the schoolmaster put his hand before his lips; but the impetuous youth, dashed it away, and was about again to speak, when a wild shriek burst from the nearest cottage; Ellen saw a man with a tattered blanket round him—a tall, ghastly creature, tossing his arms, and screaming like a wild eagle; and presently, a girl with almost as little covering crept out of the cottage, twined her thin arms about him, and led him in.

"The fever's madness is on poor Davy Byrne, 'deed is it;' and no wonder, all he has left out of his house-full, is that one girl; he had nothing but his four bones to keep them—nothing for them to do. You'll speak a good word for Davy, Miss Ellen, to the new master," said Matthew.

"Who'll speak a good word for *her*, I wonder?" inquired Lawrence, turning fiercely on the meek Matthew.

"The blessing of the poor, and the grace of God,

Lawrence Macarthy; it's a great thing to earn the one, and to live with the other—*they* will speak for her! the sick will speak for her—and the sorrowful will speak for her—and the poor will speak for her; because in her prosperity, she was meek and generous. The great God is her friend!—and in her sorest trials He will make all plain."

"You saw Abel Richards, I think you said," inquired Lawrence, "at Macroom?"

"'Deed I did not; I only heard of him, and I did not want to see him."

"You should have had a last look at him," he muttered.

"What do you mean by that, Lawrence?" inquired Ellen, rapidly.

"What I say," he replied. "God bless you, Ellen dear, I've been too long here; we'll meet again—and soon; good bye, Domine;" and choosing the highest part of the fence, he sprang over it with the grace and rapidity of an Indian. Ellen turned pale, and trembled so violently, that she was obliged to cling to the schoolmaster for support; a terrible dread of she knew not what crept over her frame, and thrilled in every vein. She would have recalled him, but she had hardly power to breathe, much less to speak—while the simple-minded treasure-seeker watching his bounding steps, exclaimed, "What a handsome fellow he is—with the air of a prince. Never could get more Latin than to call me Domine! no head for fractions—a brave, wild boy. Never read a book I think in all his life, but 'Keating's History of Ireland.'"

## CHAPTER X.

### THE BURNING.

Ellen had been away above two hours, before she was missed by the housekeeper of Spencer Court. Always precise in her dress, Mrs. Myler covered her head with her black-silk hood, took her crook-headed stick in her hand—not that any bodily infirmity obliged her to use it, but she found it needful to keep off the dogs, gather the poultry together, and sometimes to chastise the children who trespassed, or it might be an underserving wench, inexpert at her duties—and was about to set forth to seek her truant patient, when she met her with her old friend, the schoolmaster, at the porch. At first, her reprimands to the half fainting girl, were so many and so loud, that, to divert the current, Ellen mentioned the arrival of Edward Spencer in Cork: the volubility of Mrs. Myler was at once checked.

"In Cork!" she repeated, "in Cork! and never to write a line to tell me to set the place in order; never to put pen to paper to one who was so well respected in the family; who came with them from North to South.

Oh, Miss Ellen! if after all my opinion of him, he should turn out the like of that; but I'll not fuss myself about it—not I ; I'll take it easy ; as he brews, so he may bake. I'm not to know he's come."

"I told him I'd tell you," said Matthew.

"You told him you'd tell me, did you?" she repeated, "there couldn't be a more agreeable messenger, barring the post; sure it would be no great trouble to the young gentleman to write, what his forbears would have done, though I know I'm only a housekeeper; and it isn't the fashion now-a-days to respect old servants!"

"I dare say he did write to you, Mrs. Myler," said the schoolmaster, "I'm sure he did. He's not the gentleman to neglect an act of good manners to any one, particularly to you, Ma'am; but 'deed, did I forget to tell you—they shot the Post somewhere near Macroom; and I wouldn't wonder if the letter was in the bag."

"Shot the Post!" exclaimed Mrs. Myler, in bewildered astonishment; "you are not in downright and positive earnest, are you?"

"'Deed am I," replied Master Mat. "The accounts in Cork were so hard of Whiteboy doings; houses burnt for having arms, and houses burnt because they had none, and the talk of Whiteboy gatherings this side of Macroom, and in all the passes—that the Post refused to go out; until one fine boy, with the courage of a lion, and the faith of a lamb, swore he'd go, and go safe; that they wouldn't touch him; that he didn't fear them; and bragged grately. Of course, there were them in the crowd that took the wind of the word to the Whiteboys, and they won't be bragged over; so they took

him in one of the passes—and shot him! Sure I saw his mother and sister, and a power of their people, bringing home the body; the poor mother went for it, her lone, into the pass, fearing to bring any one into fresh trouble. A sad and weary load she had; she drove the car herself, poor thing; the gray rocks hanging over her road, and the fox and the eagle looking down upon her trouble; and she found him with a blanket thrown over him, but nothing living near him; the rifled bags and torn letters, and his dead horse were there too—though she didn't heed them; and God gave her strength while the stars were shining above her, to lift the body into the car—and there she sat, alone with her dead! The horse turned of himself, and as he was going, all of a sudden she came on a party of the Whiteboys, as good as forty of them; and they made way for her, parting off each side, to leave the road clear—standing like so many ghosts for her to pass; but she checked the horse, and stood up and cursed them with the full, deep curse of a widowed mother's heart; and some would have punished her, and others would not—and they rushed past her, as fierce and as fast as they could—like a fairy blast—the Lord preserve us!—saying she was mad. The poor horse kept on at the road, and her people met her at the cross; and it was well they did, for she was lying, all as one as gone, over the body—they thought there were two dead."

"Oh, the haythins!" exclaimed Mrs. Myler, "to murder the boy that trusted them."

Ellen turned pale, and thought—"If such acts herald their struggle for liberty, what will their liberty

be? Are you sure it is true?" she said. "It is so unlike any other outrage, Matthew; so cruel and so aimless."

"Ah, Miss, dear, it's all true; they've been gaining power one way or another, and it's mighty hard, so it is, for men like them to have the power and be hindered from using it. They've been terribly driven, Miss Ellen. First, the way their very souls are rack-rented out of them; and then, starvation—and the fever—and all together leading to madness; for the heart can go mad as well as the head! I think there's a line in Homer about it. But they're driven on, as I was saying, by starvation, and rack-renting, and tithes; rising against the high rents, fighting inch by inch for the bit of land, and enough lying waste all around them of bog, and mountain, and slob—fine reclaimable places to make twice as many comfortable. One can't get at the rights of that, or understand the bother they're making through the country about peace-preservation acts, insurrection acts, expense of the constabulary, prosecutions, martial law, and them little things; but shooting the Post—the poor brave fellow doing a duty that did harm to no one! When I heard it myself, and found how they were seizing every beast they could put their hands on, I thought it best to leave Daisy in Blarney, in Father Jasper's barn; for I was unasy in myself about the people and the poor little scholars, and Miss Ellen, who always strengthened me to think of; and having provided for the beast, I set out alone, knowing nothing would hurt me, and I hung any little holy thing I had about my neck as a safeguard—and well

it became me to do so, for one-half of the country is dead, and the other half—mad. God look down upon them, benighted and bothered as they are—not knowing what they are after." Master Mat continued talking after Ellen had sought the quiet of her own little chamber.

When Mrs. Myler had clearly ascertained that the young master was in Ireland, and might be home that very night, she repaired to the housekeeper's room, and after sundry inefficient attempts succeeded in forcing the bell to ring—which it did at last, in a rapid, unnatural manner. Mat went on talking and musing, and then talking again—heedless of the flapping of bare feet along the passages, and the throwing open of doors, until the handles rang again; nor did he heed the exclamations or the tones of inquiry, or the electrical dictations of the housekeeper, who was guilty of the folly of expecting a disorganised Irish household to fall into order at once; quite forgetting that she herself had been almost as neglectful of her duties to the best rooms, as the servants had been of theirs.

"It's asy talking for you, Mrs. Myler, Ma'am," expostulated the cook, "to talk of my killing turkeys to hang. Faix, it's the fox, bad cess to him, that hung the last of the turkey-hens over his showlder this very morning; they're grown as tame as *nagurs*, the ugly devils, since the fever thinned the country, and such of the poor boys as are left alive haven't strength to throw as much as a stone afther them; Bran has never left Miss Ellen since she took ill, and the poor tarrier's not worth a *traneen;* the hens are walking 'ottomies, for Mr. Carey wouldn't give us a

grain of oats, to save our lives; and he cramming the ould coach-horses up to folly, and not a puff in 'em. I wish I'd had the luck not to let Miss Ellen see the beautiful pair of duty ducks the Widdy Murphy brought this morning, along wid a basket full of chickens; but she turned 'em off, saying, she wanted 'em worse herself than we did; and sign by it, the widdy sould them to a Cork joulter for eightpence a couple in the avenue, under the sight of my own eyes, and the lovely ducks for tenpence—the ducks war so fat, that the widdy kep' the sun off 'em for fear they'd turn to an oil! There's no use, Mrs. Myler, in expecting me to cook a dinner for the young masther. I'll not turn my back on any girl in the counthry for cookery, biled, roast, briled, or even sally-lunn, or slim-cake, but I can't cook out o' nothing."

"There are some hams and a tongue in the saw-dust, dry packed," said Mrs. Myler, whose increasing bewilderment lowered her voice.

"There was—and good right I have to know it—I went hunting everywhere for the weary cat and her kittens; and, maybe, she and her black brood didn't riddle mee hands, and they soft out of the first scald of mee praskeens and tidy aprons; and bee the same token, Mrs. Myler, it's often ye promised mee new *rowlers;* and we haven't so much as a *skreed* left—since the time the cows broke into the drying-ground, and we ating our bit of dinner, and swollowed bodily the last holland sheets; it was a judgment upon you, Mrs. Myler, Ma'am; as long as ye'd suffer us to dry the clothes on the furze bushes the sunny side of the

meadow, the never a thing came across 'em ; but you must have a north bleach green, with props and poles in it like a gallows green. Small blame to the poor cattle to come and look at such an unnatural thing."

"But the hams, Molly?" said Mrs. Myler.

"Sure the cat made her bed beside 'em; and betwixt herself and the jumpers, they didn't lave as much as would trap a mouse."

"And why didn't you tell me this?"

"Where was the good of vexing you? Sure, who'd drame of the young gentleman coming here without proper letting on; and the country in such a state. Faix, one would think the quality fancies they've nothing to do but order things in from the butcher's and baker's, the way they do in Dublin. If he's any way particular in his ating! he'll be hungry enough. We've salted down the last pig, as you know, Ma'am, to plase Miss Ellen, who grudged them the potatoes; and barring the boys can find a rabbit, or a trout (dirty trash) in the river, or a draw or two of pigeons from the pigeon-house, there's nothing but the kitchen stock; and both the pickled pork and corned beef is gone rusty."

"There's something broke the few bottles of sherry left after the poor master's funeral," said the old butler; "but there's a quarter cask of claret, and another of Madeira—not touched."

"And the whiskey, Morty?" inquired Mrs. Myler.

"The ground's mighty soft under the cask of *rale* Cork," replied Morty, with a very grave face, "so I'm thinking it has *leaked* a little."

"Oh, Morty, Morty!" ejaculated Mrs. Myler.

"Oh, as I'm a living sinner! death before dishonour!" answered the pompous old butler. "I'd scorn it, Ma'am; and it under my care."

"The Lord look down upon us!" ejaculated the housemaid, "the rain has been beating in through all parts of the roof, and to save the beds I put them top 'another, so they're all soaked through."

It was quite true that the pestilence which overspread the country, seemed to have laid a blight even upon sticks and stones; people thought only of preserving life, and, careless of property at all times, they became still more careless then. Mrs. Myler indeed was one of the best of her class in this respect, she was habitually careful; but Ellen's illness, her increasing years, dread of "the sickness," and the incorrigible habits of the under servants, had done more to make Spencer Court unlike its former self in a few months, than it would have required as many years to do in an English dwelling, where all goes on as orderly and as carefully when the master is away, as it does when he is present.

"After all, Ma'am," said the housemaid to Mrs. Myler, when she came to count the blankets and finally arrange about a bed-room, "they say below, things ain't so bad, after all; the coachman and groom declare the horses are up to any thing, and being a young gentleman he'll think a deal of them, no doubt; the dogs are wonderful, the men say, and a fine shot (as I dare say the master is) can bring home his own dinner any day. If the carpenter, as well as poor Jemmy Gore the smith, had not died last week, we'd have had the windows made as good as new; but God help us!

after all our trouble sure there's every chance of his never reaching the house alive—think of the poor post-boy—I'll say nothing—the Whiteboys, I'm tould, are book sworn against all landlords; and indeed it would be only right to let the poor young gentleman know this," and she glanced with a peculiar expression towards the housekeeper, to see how she received the intimation.

"Give a hint, indeed!" exclaimed the Northern, "give a hint is it, Biddy, to a gentleman not to come to his own estate because of the fear of a pack of beggarly marauders, in dirty white shirts and black faces; black sheep, enagh! that are afraid to look the holy sun in the eyes! disgrace Ireland to the young Englishman for ever, and he coming with his heart full of kind thoughts like his uncle towards us, by telling him his throat will be cut on the journey! I wonder ye haven't more pride in ye for the land of your birth! His uncle lived through all the battery—the Rockites, and Whitefeet, and Starlights, and Moonlights, and peep o' day devils; Biddy, as you know, ever since he lost the poor mistress—never, since he turned Abel Richards off, was a lock turned on the hall door; he was afraid of no one."

"Nor no one of him," said Biddy, drily, thinking that was the secret of his safety.

"That doesn't sound respectful of even a dead master," said the housekeeper, bridling; "and you should mind your words, Biddy Doyle, though God knows it's the truth; for if he'd get into a bit of a pet with any of the boys he'd warn them to leave the work, and

they'd just stand their spade in it and walk away, then come back quite natural the next morning, and no more about it."

Biddy agreed that he was the best master "that ever stood in shoe-leather," that he was a wonder; and in proportion as she praised and arranged the room, heaping turf upon turf on the fire that blazed upon the hearth, so did Mrs. Myler's loquacity increase, and Biddy, presuming on her condescension (for she kept the "lower servants," as she called them, at a much greater distance than did Miss Ellen), ventured to say, "Why, then, Mrs. Myler, Ma'am, if I may make so bould, there's one thing I've often thought I'd like to know — what put such bitter black blood betwixt yerself and Mr. Richards, ould Abey, the baste, and he of the same religion and all."

"Ye'd like to know, Biddy, I dare say," answered Mrs. Myler, and she did not speak it bitterly, "and ye'r an honest girl, and I'm sure safe and silent, for you know all that's working through the country and yet never mention it; yet I'm not going to tell you —no—nor no one else. I call no one of my religion whose—but no matter—there—if ye drag the quilt that way, it's into ribands ye'll shred it. Afraid of coming to his own estate, indeed!" muttered Mrs. Myler, as she struck her walking-stick rapidly on the floor, preparatory to another journey through the house, into rooms where fires had not been lit for a year, and into closets where old china and plate were to be dusted and cleaned forthwith.

There was a universal confusion everywhere, save in

Ellen's little chamber; a sort of panic seemed to have seized on the servants, who kept running against each other at every door and every turning of the long gloomy passages, and fancying that the rushing of the rapid river—the sound they had been accustomed to so long that they had usually ceased to hear it—was the noise of carriage-wheels; and every thing went wrong, the very chairs and tables seemed to stand in the way on purpose; the supply of candles in the house was so limited that the butler, having furnished forth the stately necked silver candlesticks with long, yellow, narrow candles of home manufacture, found that none could be spared for domestic use; but Irish invention frequently makes up for the want of forethought; escalop shells were in several instances filled with grease, and cotton or tow wicks set therein, and they flared away with a ghastly light in pantry and kitchen; torches of bog-wood were placed ready for kindling by the side of the blazing hall fire, so that they might be ready at a moment's notice. As the night advanced every thing seemed to assume a more comfortable appearance; the house warmed; for though nominally summer, it was more like an English November than an Irish June.

"I'd rather he'd come by night than by day," thought the housekeeper to herself, "if he will come to the South first—which is a great pity. I'd be ashamed the first thing he saw at his own gate should be the fever-sheet, or may be the corpse itself going—alone a'most—to the grave."

The schoolmaster remained for some time in the pas-

sage, heedless of the bustle that was around him; and after the excitement caused by his account of the murder of the post-office messenger was over, he was left unquestioned, and alone. This would not have been the case at any other time, but the servants had a new interest. As with all Roman Catholic servants in Ireland—the exception being perhaps one in fifty—the household of Spencer Court sided with the disturbers; there was not a domestic within those walls, except Mrs. Myler, who would have appropriated a farthing to his, or her use; they were honest, civil, industrious; but they *were of the* "*band*," and could have looked upon burning or murder with indifference, if commanded by the powers they obeyed.

Ellen sat in her room alone; it was a pleasant little room, communicating with a sort of French closet in which she slept; the window, boasting the rare adornment of a balcony, overlooked the garden. Ever and anon the sound of an opening door, the shrill call of the housemaid, the answering gruff voice of the deaf butler, or an all-powerful command from the lungs of Mrs. Myler, echoed through her chamber; but she heard them not, her thoughts were preoccupied. Ellen's life had been devoted to thought for others; but now, circumstances compelled her to think of herself. We have said, that brought up as Ellen Macdonnel had been, the sense or dependence—mere dependence—did not press upon or weigh her down as it would have done other girls, with as high a spirit, who had been differently circumstanced; almost every one around her lived in the same manner, more or less; but this had not interfered with the

growth of other and most delicate feelings. Her illness followed Mr. Spencer's death so rapidly, that in the absence of Dean Graves' family, she had had no one to advise with as to her future life. Their return was a great comfort to her, and she resolved to write to Miss Graves that very evening, or go to the Glebe the next morning, if she were able. She knew, that whatever she wished to do, her only earthly tie—Lawrence—would for many reasons oppose; and her feelings towards him, were of old affections, and new fears. She tried to guide her pen, but could not; she had never felt her loneliness—the entire desolateness of her state—so bitterly, as on that evening. She sat opposite the window, shivering—although a fire was heaped high upon the hearth—shivering, and weeping; the misty atmosphere without, assumed a crimson hue as the sun-set; and then it faded into the deep, cold gray of twilight, through which she could hardly distinguish the outlines of those glorious mountains which had been to her as familiar friends. "Friends!" had Ellen any such! were there any who would launch the bark upon a world of which she knew so little! were there any who would, as an act of free grace, do for her, what those over whom the grave had closed were bound by every law, human and divine, to have done, and did not! leaving her, lovely, young, and unprotected, the sport of fortune; a creature, the poetry of whose character had been elevated, not subdued, by her late bodily and mental suffering; whose noble, brave-hearted part-taking with the oppressed, had led her to confide in, and side with, what she now believed was the influence of an unseen party, work-

ing upon poverty; whose heart yearned for sympathy, even more than for knowledge; whose free spirit loved liberty; whose heroic nature could both dare and do; and yet, was restrained by a moral consciousness, a sort of natural right-judging, which made Lawrence Macarthy only that morning reproach a spirit that was far loftier as well as purer than his own. There were reasons—one especially—why she could not accept the shelter of Lawrence's ruined home. How often she wept, and even wished that he had been content to till the few remaining acres of the once princely possessions of his house; and then, she could have worked, have lived and died with him; or, in open, honest, bold-faced war, she could have followed a soldier's precarious fortunes into another land, where his principles would have permitted him to take service. But now—alas! alas! he was the most unfitted of all creatures to protect *her*.

The evening had long deepened into night, yet still she sat and wept: looking out into the darkness. Her attention was roused by a bright and sudden flame shooting upwards; it could not be, she thought, very far from Spencer Court. She stept to the window and saw what, at the moment, she hoped might be a bonfire, at the foot of one of the nearest mountains. She thought she heard the winding of a horn, and an halloo. She opened the casement; and then, certainly and distinctly, she heard a horn blown not very far distant, answered by another, and another. With trembling eagerness she watched the progress of the fire: after the first rush of light into the sky, it burnt low and red, and then gradually rose and rose like a pyre, spreading

above and around, increasing with fearful intensity. After a while she could see dark figures pass, catching for an instant the brightness of the light; and, so still was the night, that she heard the halloos, the yells, and the horns, issuing their terrible warnings, or calling to the mountain-dwellers. A dreadful thought took possession of her mind, and chained her to the spot; where she continued to stand without the power to withdraw.

"The boys are early at work this evenin', Miss," said Biddy, from the garden, in an unconcerned voice as she looked up at Ellen, "and your's is the only windy in the house that has so fine a view, Miss, dear; Mrs. Myler and the rest are *podgering* away at the work within. Bedad, if the young master comes home to-night, he can't but say that Abel Richards' house makes a fine bonfire to welcome him."

Lawrence Macarthy's words rang upon Ellen's heart; she could hardly articulate. She fixed her eyes upon the conflagration waxing stronger and stronger; it was the nearest approach the Fire King of the Whiteboys had yet made to Spencer Court.

"Well!" continued the housemaid, "he gave many a one a cowld death. It's a hot one he'll have himself."

"Surely, surely he is not there!" exclaimed Ellen.

"Oh! murder, Miss, they wouldn't be the fools to burn the house and he *not* in it," was the cool reply.

It would be impossible to describe Ellen's sensations; her heart beat violently.

"I wonder," said the girl, "would they have been

so soon down upon Black Aby only for the word of the soldiers that's to come into Kenmare, to-morrow."

"Oh, mercy! what a howl was that!" exclaimed Ellen, pressing her face into her hands.

"Ah, ah!" laughed the girl below, "it was a strong cry, sure enough. Well, Miss, he was no friend of yours, and—whisht." She sprang upon a wheelbarrow that was under the window, and light of foot and limb, swang herself into the balcony. "If any thing—I mane any questions were to be asked—sure you and I, and that half-witted Master Mat, could well prove an alibi for Mr. Lawrence; sure, I saw him with you all this evening."

"Mr. Lawrence!" repeated Ellen, drawing herself up proudly. "Mr. Lawrence! how dare you suppose he could be concerned in such an outrage as that."

"Outrage! I call it justice, Miss Ellen; and so will all the counthry. What's come to her at all," she muttered, as the moon at full, bursting through the clouds, shone upon Ellen, showing her white and rigid as marble. "God bless us, is it dead standing she is? Well," continued the girl, lifting her in her arms and laying her on the sofa, "well, I never see the likes o' that. With the glory of that fire through the country, to think of her taking on so for the burning of ould Richards!"

## CHAPTER XI.

### THE WARMED ADDER.

"Oh, Miss, dear!" exclaimed Biddy, while wiping away the tears that rolled over her thick rosy cheeks with the rough back of her stubbed hand.

"Oh, Miss, darling! it's yerself that has frightened the life out o' me; I had a wonderful drame last night, and sure as the stars are rowling above us, it's read to me, as clear as a printed book—it is indeed; bedad an deed, I'd raythor see ould Aby burnt ten times over wid fire and faggot, than see *you* lying there, for all the world like a lilly of Inchegeela; thanks be to the Almighty ye'r coming to yerself again, Miss, though sorra' a thrifle of colour betwixt the faver and the fright is there in yer sweet cheek. Oh, then, Miss Ellen, you that has larning and feeling both, can you think it any detremint to see the flames of that nagur's house, mountin' up to the heavens; carrying his scarlet sins to the judgment, and telling with their fiery tongues of his wickedness."

"Of their *own* wickedness, Biddy; of their own mad wickedness! Oh, may Heaven pour a different spirit

into the hearts of this people," she continued, fervently, "and teach them to respect law!"

"Whisht, Miss, whisht!" said the girl. "Sure you couldn't expect them to respect what they know nothing about; the poor never hear of law, except from the man that distrains their bit of land, sends them to gaol, or houseless and homeless through the world!"

Ellen felt hardly able to reply, yet she murmured,

"I must show you the folly, to say nothing of the wickedness of such doings, when I am able. But think, what to-morrow, what a week will bring into this heart-broken district; already has the harrow of pestilence and starvation passed over it; but then will come the loosened soldier; the arrest of the innocent, as well as the guilty; and the burning of poverty's last shelter—the—the—there, I can talk no more about it, it drives me mad."

"God help us! how wild you look Miss, darling, but sure," and she advanced close to Ellen Macdonnel, and spoke into her ear, "sure you must know, dear, that we're not always to be tramped into the earth; sure they say the French are for us, an' the Americays; but, oh, murder! to think that I haven't as much as a drop of vinegar to keep the weakness off her! Drink this water, jewel! faith, I fetched it myself this morning from the blessed well, on purpose to be more refreshing in yer room, and it sparkling up out of the earth like diamonds. It's a poor case I haven't a drop of the vinegar, though all the gooseberry wine turned into it last year, all in spite to Mrs. Myler, who couldn't find it in her heart to give it enough of the sugar—north fashion!

but sure it's gone over the country for the fever; she'd never grudge the poor papists the vinegar any way! There, jewel, don't keep looking at that fire, don't be harassing yerself watching it; it'll soon be gone now, and sorra' a rat even in it, that isn't out of pain long ago, sure that's a comfort—better that, dear, than have them running through the world with their pison. Oh, wisha! a weary on it for a fire, and they'll keep such a shillooing through the country about it. There, don't ye see it's slacking down now. I wish the curtain would draw, and then I could shut it out from yer eyes that will look at nothing else!"

It was curious to see the affectionate tenderness that Biddy displayed towards her "young Lady," and contrast it with her recklessness of life; but this was no new reading of Irish character, under similar circumstances. After some delay, and much persuasion from Ellen, who longed to be alone, she left her; promising to return in less than an hour, to see how she was getting on.

The fire! the fire! Ellen could not shut it out, even when she closed her eyes, and pressed them down with her fingers—still, it blazed before her. Sometimes, the river would catch its brightness, and look like a stream of lava passing into darkness—a mockery of the war-spirit, darting its arrowy tongues into the sky, flinging out flakes of crimson, in fierce sport with destruction; throwing up burning brands amid the wreathing smoke, and returning them to earth in stars and sparkles of refulgent brightness. Oh, that terrible fire! barn, and haystack, ricks of "duty turf," and furze, and stacks of

various grain, legions of "duty fowl," were turned into ashes; the potatoes, which Abel Richards would rather have let rot than sell to feed the poor—his cruelty thus mastering his avarice—were roasted in the smouldering pits. The Whiteboys danced round the flames like wild Indians round a prairie fire. On—above—around—it went; the old gray horse burst forth before the fire reached his stable, but was shot by those who had sworn no living thing should escape from Abel Richard's house, or holdings. On—on—up, and around—crackling and screaming to the hills—to the stars; a wild, wrathful thing; folding and unfolding itself, in the many hues of the tyrant element; hissing and grappling in fierce combat with the material world over which it triumphed. The poor, gentle, stalled cattle; their voices of agony were lost in the savage yells of vengeance. On—on—encircling all within its grasp—the avenger! the terrible, fearless, lawless avenger! The mad rioting of the fierce untameable element—the attendant demon of revolt—was rendered still more terrible by Ellen's imagination; she knew that all the property in that bad man's house, had been wrought by fraud from the labour of white slaves; that he had drunk human tears, inhaled the sighs of his fellow-creatures, as others inhale sea breezes, to gather strength. Misery sent no pang to his heart—and death! he would sneer at the hollow eye, and the bony hand, and say, "it was good for the poor to be at rest." Yet, still, a text of Scripture, one of the laws of the great lawgiver, seemed written before her eyes, and was sounding like a trumpet in her ears, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord."

And oh! to send the sinner into eternity with all his unrepented crimes! And by whom was this done! Ellen at the moment forgot all the provocation; the families driven forth to starve; the insults heaped upon a faith which, delusive though it may be, is dearer—far dearer to the Irishman than life; the whine, the cant; the hypocrisy! She forgot all; for the result—the fearful result was before her!

Lawrence too, where was Lawrence? Indignantly as she had repelled the insinuation of the girl, her heart beat violently, when she again questioned herself as to where he was at that moment—if possible, worse agony to think of, *who* was his companion. She started from her seat as her ears again tingled from the blast of a horn; at first softened by distance, then, crashing nearer among the mountains, it sounded like a curse; she withdrew her hands, and there—suddenly—in a moment—before her—on the balcony—now in the room—dripping from the river he had forded—staggered, more dead than alive—Abel Richards!

"Hide me! as you hope for mercy, hide me!" he exclaimed, falling on his knees before Ellen. "I have escaped by miracle; and before this they know it—No—you must hide me here—there isn't one of the servants who would not shout at me, point me out to those who have burned me out of house and home—they won't suspect the sister of Lawrence Macarthy of harbouring me. I'll leave you all I have in the world if you save my life," he continued, grovelling at her feet. "I'll make ye a heiress. Listen! There were

lies told of me to you—oh, I always loved the ground you walked on!"

"Wretch!" exclaimed Ellen, disengaging her dress from his grasp, while the bitterest contempt mingled with thankfulness that he was not destroyed. "Stand back. Now follow—and you can conceal yourself in the north closet."

"No, Miss Ellen, no—they fancy that Myler is my friend, and may think I am hid there—but in your room I shall be safe. Oh! as you hope for mercy, don't betray me. I'm not fit to die yet—I'm not, indeed. I'll make restitution—I will—I'll give up all for you to do what's pleasing to you through the country, if you'll save me—this one night!"

Language could not express her contempt, as he crouched and writhed before her.

"I'm sorry I did not stay in England! The country was so disturbed, I came to look after my little property. Sure I can go there"—he pointed to the recess where Ellen slept.

"No," she said, "not there."

"There, then." He pointed to what in Ireland is called a hanging press, in which ladies suspend their dresses.

Ellen opened it. "Go in."

"You will bar the window," he whispered, trembling from cold and terror.

"No," she replied. "That would indeed excite suspicion, to bar a window that has not been barred for years."

He entered the "press."

"You will not betray me, Miss Ellen, dear," he muttered, clasping his hands, and shuddering. "You will not. I have been a brand pluckt from the burning before now. I have still enough left to reward you. But not a word," he added, half whimpering; "not a word, even to Myler. She's back-sliding, Miss Ellen—she's backsliding; the lust of the eye, and the pride of life; it would do you no good to betray a poor sinner—a humble, faithful servant of Him—"

"Peace, peace!" said Ellen Macdonnel, interrupting him, while, pale and agitated, she looked, in her long white dressing-robe, more like a spectre than a living woman; "this is no time for blasphemy!" She had hardly spoken when another horn sounded, and though it was more distant than the last, Abel sunk upon his knees.

"Shut me up," he muttered, "shut me up! the boards are so thin—and stop—promise, Miss Ellen, you will not betray me; do but swear it to me and you shall have all I have in the world. I call God to witness if I leave this house alive I'll make you rich—promise, swear—oh do, do—in pity—in pity!"

"There is no need," replied Ellen Macdonnel, with the high and pure dignity of manner, which dignity of purpose never fails to impart; "there is no need to promise, you are beneath an Irish roof, and you have asked protection of an Irish woman." She shut-to the frail door, and clasped it; her weakness had vanished—the mind's strength had conquered the body's weakness. But as she paced the room, she could hear the low-hearted

creature, now muttering a half disjointed Scripture phrase; then whispering out the reward he would give, mingled with an entreaty for safety. Ellen paused; she thought over the past; she recalled the smooth, oily, sleek, bowing Abel Richards of her childhood; ready with a toy for her pleasure, when she was in favour; and an insult, when she was out of favour; and then, the "converted" Abel Richards, with sad bewailment at his fallen state; and a keen eye, and griping fingers, playing on Mrs. Spencer's peculiar views, for his own advancement; then, the growing tyrant, cringing to the rich, and grinding the poor—yet aping sanctity. Once, he had even talked to her of love; she shuddered when she thought of *that;* and now, having escaped as by a miracle, from the mad vengeance which had fallen upon many who far less deserved it, he appeared in all the native hideousness of his low and grovelling nature—the nature that devours the poor; that turns a deaf ear to the hungry; that utters to disobey the sacred commands of God—with holy words and polluted lips. There he was, trembling with fear; his eyes glazed, his lips parched; peeping, through the chinks of the few boards that sheltered him, to see the glare of his burning house; knowing that if he were tracked, nothing could save him; and that one word from her—one whisper—would seal his doom! All this passed with the rapidity of lightning through Ellen's mind. She could hear his teeth chatter, as his huge form lay curled up into a narrow compass. Suddenly, her door shook, and she perceived that by a violent effort Abel became suddenly still as the death he feared to meet—she opened it, and her faithful dog

stalked into the room; old as he was, and though he had lost much of his activity, he was as sagacious as ever. He entered, and looking into his lady's face, uttered a low, sharp bark—or rather a sound between a howl and a bark—with every hair on his neck bristled; he turned to the "press," and sniffed long and loudly, then raised his head to his mistress again, as if to say, "What means this?"

"Down, Bran, down sir," she said; yet the entrance of the dog at the moment, was such a relief, so positive an assurance of protection, that she threw her arms round his neck and rested her cheek on his head. The creature returned the caress by licking her fingers. "Good dog—down friend—down"—she repeated. But Bran was not so easily satisfied; he walked to the window; the burning had then fallen into a low, bright, glowing heap, small and concentrated, you might fancy it the eye of some fabled monster glaring from the mountain pass upon the valley and the river; the dog looked at it silently, then raising his head to the full, bright moon—Queen of the Sky! for not a cloud floated near her—he howled a sort of chaunt, as if telling her of the evil he had witnessed,—stately and stern as a lion he turned round and without another glance at his mistress, laid down opposite the "press," placed his nose between his rough paws, and resolved to watch and wait; for his eyes remained unclosed, and his position as firm as if he had been carved in marble.

Presently Biddy entered with a bowl of whey sufficiently large for a bath. "I left you like a lily, avourneen," she said, "and I find you like a rose. I'm

thinking it's all over yonder, Glory be to God! Well, I'll say no more, since it ain't plasing to you; but go to bed, dear—sorra a wink Mrs. Myler will let on one of our eyes this blessed night—barrin' yours. And all for a master we never saw, and never may see—for he's had warning out of the country by the light of the moon, if he's the sense to take it."

"He has had no warning, Biddy."

"Isn't that," and she pointed to the fire, "warning enough for his sort, though I'll not deny his goodness in many ways, forgiving rents, and the like. But, Miss, the ould acres will *rowl* back to their places, I'm thinking, if the boys can hold on—there, I'll not be vexing you. Oh, the weary on it!—sure it's not sitting down to read on a book ye are, this time o' night; go to bed, a lannan! and God bless ye—ye won't! Well! now I'll believe what my sister Betty Doyle used to say ov ye before she went to England—that you war the most resolute young lady in the country."

After much entreaty, Ellen persuaded the girl to leave her; but before she did, she looked again towards the scene of frightful devastation.

"It's blue, and gray, and mouldly-looking enough, Misther Abel's place is, now, any way! It's the poor innocent birds and beasts that was in it, I'm thinking of;—maybe there won't be a shillooing through the country! and a dale they'll find out by it! Well! my heart riz wid the blaze; but it has sunk wid the embers. Now if Mr. Lawrence—"

"If you do not go to bed yourself, Biddy," interrupted Ellen, "if you do not go directly to bed, I beg

you will hold your tongue; you see how ill I am, and yet you will go on talking."

"Thath! well, sure I oughtn't to do any thing to vex you, dear; sup the whey while there's any heat in it—come Bran."

"No, Bran will stay with me to-night; go at once, Biddy."

"Ye're afeered of something, Miss Ellen, dear, or it's not keeping Bran with ye, ye'd be," said the keen-thinking girl, as she swung the door in her hand.

"Afraid! no, I am not afraid; I have been protected all my life by the Power that protects me now," replied Ellen, and she looked as Biddy thought, "bright as an angel." "I am not afraid—but—but my old friend shall stay with me; for company, only for company; won't you, Bran?"

And Bran arose and put his nose, and a long, cold, hard, grizzled nose it was, into Ellen's hand, and replied in his own way by a long drawn sort of "sough."

"To think of that!" said the housemaid, as she was leaving the room, "to think of that! If the baste hasn't the understanding of a Christian."

Ellen had no watch to tell the passing hours, no glittering time-piece to mark the golden numbers. The clocks of the house differed so widely that she could rely on none, and yet it was a relief to hear them croak or bell out the untrue time.

Whenever Richards attempted to move or speak, Bran bristled and growled, and the coward became silent. "Short as a Summer night in June," is a poet's line; it was not short to Ellen! Now, nothing but a pall of

smoke, marked where the fire had blazed so brightly; the country was silent and lonely as a churchyard at midnight; there was no sound of life on hill or valley. Ellen tried to read, but fancied she was surrounded by eyes watching her every movement; she was too bewildered even to calculate as to how Abel proposed leaving the house. It might be that her sense of hearing was not as acute as usual; but the dog evidently heard something in the garden which she saw not, for he arose and walked towards the window she had shut down; but his hair did not bristle; on the contrary, he laid down his ears and whined, looked back at Ellen and moved his tail.

"What is it?" murmured Abel Richards; and then Bran gathered his lips from off his gums, with a fierce growl, and resumed his watch. Ellen had no time left for conjecture, for a rough hand shook the window, and the form of a man who pressed his face against the glass became visible. "Your promise," again mutmuttered Richards; and again the dog bared his gums, and growled.

"Ellen! Ellen!" was breathed through the window; —it was Lawrence Macarthy!

"Oh, do not open it," said Abel, in a voice surpressed by terror.

Ellen turned her head towards him, and though she spoke low—too low to be heard without—Richards heard her, "Be still, and you are safe."

"Will you open the window, Ellen," exclaimed Lawrence, impatiently shaking the massive frame, "I have not a moment to stay." Before Ellen's trembling

hands could undo the hasps, her brother had forced them back. He was greatly excited, large drops stood upon his brow, his face was flushed, and his eyes were blood-shot.

"Why do you look so at me, Ellen; and how comes it, you are not in bed?" Ellen pointed to where the smoke was wreathing against a sky, just lighting into a pale, bright gray—an intimation of the first dawn of morning. "Ah, you are not strong enough for such a scene; but it was justice—pure justice; if it had not been—." Suddenly, the dreadful thought flashed upon Ellen, that if Lawrence, her brother, had been a mover in the terrible events of that night, he was about to criminate himself, and that in the presence of his greatest enemy—*his* enemy, under *her* protection!

"Do not talk of it, dear Lawrence, I know you were not there;" she said, rapidly, "had nothing to do with it; knew nothing of it. But tell me what you do here, what you want of me."

"Not there!—not have to do with it!" he exclaimed, indignantly, while his eyes flashed. "Why you have heard me swear a hundred times that I would have my revenge; and yet, Ellen, I have missed it!" Ellen trembled, and thrilled in every limb; her blood tingled, her head whirled round.

"Peace! you will send me to my grave with this mad, and wicked violence!" she said, wildly. "Besides, it is all a vision—a fable—a lie—a dream; you were *not* there; you were asleep, and dreamed it. You are intoxicated; I see you are; you can hardly stand—you reel and stag-

ger; there, I saw it—I saw it the moment you came in." And she threw herself on his bosom.

"My poor sister! my gentle, well-loved, and once heroic sister!" he said, pushing back the hair that had fallen over her throbbing temples, "indeed I ought not to agitate you thus; 'but the fox is burnt out; and, though he has escaped, it is only for a time.'" Ellen placed her hand on his lips. "Can you understand me," he said, holding her from him, "can you be calm for a minute?"

"Yes, quite, if you will come out of this close room," she replied. "I am suffocated!"

"No," he answered, obstinately, "not an inch from this will I move, unless you will let me lay down there for half-an-hour to rest, for I am weary; they would rush into it before the fitting time; I wanted them to wait, but they would not."

"I knew," she exclaimed, "you did not urge it."

"I wanted no half work," was his reply. "The time was not fully come; the soldiers will be all over the country before this day's noon; they have no proof against me."

"Speak low, dear Lawrence," said Ellen, "or come into another room."

"Why should I speak low," he answered, raising his voice, "or go anywhere else; I can hardly move my limbs; but I have these papers," and he drew them forth, "of our lists and passes, and one or two letters; and if they were found, we should all be shot or hanged; every tree would bear fruit then. I know not where to

conceal them, for my ruins will be closely searched, and I have brought them to you, *sister*, and charge you to guard them with *your* life, if you value *mine*."

Ellen took the papers. She glanced timidly round the room, and saw, or fancied she saw, the cold gray eye of Abel Richards gleaming through a crevice.

"Why not burn them at once," she said, advancing them towards the flame of the candle.

"You are surely mad!" exclaimed the fierce Lawrence, grasping her arm; "they are of inestimable value and importance! Burn them, indeed! You know not what you say! guard them, I charge you by the memory of your poor sacrificed mother, as you would your life; safer; for, like myself, Ellen, for your life you care little; but as you would guard your faith and honour! My life, and the lives of many brave friends of our country, are now in your keeping. You tremble, and change colour. I know not where else to bestow them, Ellen, or would not trouble you."

"Oh, Lawrence!" she exclaimed, "you cannot think I feel any thing I can do for you to be a trouble!"

"I may reclaim them in a week—or in less, perhaps —for our brave friend—"

"No—" interrupted Ellen; "I will hear no word of him, under any pretext whatever, Lawrence; and you must not speak another word. Would it not be well?" she continued, in a half whisper; "would it not be well for you to wash your face and hands in the next room? the morning will be here in an hour, and it

would look ill if you were met with such—" she was going to say "blackness," but changed it into "'soil' on your face. This is some of the water of the Blessed Well, and will refresh you."

"No, Ellen," he answered; "I am hardly worthy of that water now; they say it washes blood in, not out!"

Ellen shuddered. Lawrence had sat down, and his appearance strongly confirmed what she had said to him at the wildest hazard. He seemed more and more overcome and stupified each moment. Still, her self-possession did not desert her. Withdrawing beyond the range of Abel's eye, she rustled at an old cabinet, which she unlocked and locked, as if placing the papers therein; while, in fact, she concealed them in her bosom; and in answer to his last words, she replied, "I told you you were raving, Lawrence, and I wish I could calm you."

"You can, Ellen; watch just for half an hour, while I sleep. I am so worn, even ten minutes' sleep will refresh me. All the people in the house are staunch, except Myler, so I care not who sees me go or come. Half an hour!—that will do. Here; my father's watch will tell the time; and if all the red-coats met me at daybreak, what then? I have been shooting; shooting rabbits! Yes!—half an hour; there's my gun; not more than half an hour!"

Before he had finished speaking, he leaned from the chair on which he sat, across to the old-fashioned half sofa—half bed—and in a moment sunk into a sleep deep and profound. The dark crimson curtains that fell from the canopy, shaded, without concealing his fea-

tures, which the bright light of the lamp placed in strong relief. Ellen sunk upon a seat, so as to command the room; she placed the watch upon the next division of the tripod the lamp stood upon, and having examined the priming and loading of the gun, she laid it on her lap.

Bran maintained his original position, and nothing, except the heavy breathing which indicated the fatigued sleep of the Whiteboy, gave evidence of life within that chamber; for Abel dared not speak or move. Ellen did not venture to think of what the future might be; she fixed her mind steadily upon her sacred bond to shelter her great enemy, when he demanded shelter; and she felt that she must leave the working out of her perplexity and danger to the Almighty. The events of the day were dancing wildly through her brain—she could place nothing in its right position; at last she murmured a few words of prayer within her mind, and was comforted. The hand was moving, she thought, slowly round the dial, and the light rushing rapidly towards morning.

Without making as much noise as would scare a throstle from its nest, the attentive and kind-hearted Biddy entered to see if the "young lady wanted any thing," and started with astonishment when she beheld the sleeping Lawrence; Ellen put her finger to her lips, while Biddy clasped her hands.

"It's tired out of his life, he is," she whispered to Ellen: "and so it was for him you war waiting! May the saints watch over him, for he's standing up for our rights! Off must he be in less than an hour?

Well—I'll go down, for we're waiting still for the young master—and keep every one to the other side of the house; only, for the love of glory, let him be away in time. Mr. Lawrence there—and she watching him—the two lone birds of the world!" and the girl stole away as quietly as she had entered.

But a few more moments remained to the sleeper: how long they seemed—and how the light increased. At last she awoke him, and he rose with the suddenness of one accustomed to a rapid *reveillée*. He looked a different creature after steeping his face in water. Then he warned her again to remember that lives—precious lives—lives upon which depended the salvation of their country, were in her keeping. She listened—pressed his hand between her own—and gazed from the window upon his rapid and energetic course, until a sudden burst of glory from the rising sun, forced her to withdraw her eyes, and when she looked again, he had disappeared.

The loud growling of the dog warned her that her unwelcome prisoner was stirring. A determined movement of an arm that had gained strength with daylight, loosened the fastening, and Abel Richards glared up at Ellen Macdonel. There remained but few traces of the servility of the slave; but there was an evident increase of insolence in eyes, never respectful to women. He knew that he was still in Ellen's power, but he also knew that *she* was in *his*. He could hardly master his thirst for vengeance; yet he tried to frame his words.

Ellen knew him; and she listened silently to the half

muttered prayer and entreaty which crept from his lips. Still she said within herself, "I have done right—I have not betrayed—I have not violated the hospitality of my country."

Richards began entreating, as the morning advanced, that she would devise some plan for his escape. This she could not do; the contending emotions of past hours, had overwhelmed her; and the preservation of the papers from Abel, whose gaze was perpetually wandering towards the cabinet, seemed more necessary to her than existence.

"Is he gone, Miss?" said Bridget, whose approach this time had not been noiseless. "Is he gone? Oh, Wisha! glory be for that, any how. There's a set of the beggarly polis — and a magistrate on the road—and they'll cross the strame at the bottom of the meadow. Mrs. Myler's closing the window for fear they'd be axing something to eat, and so little in the house. I'll be back in five minutes, Miss, dear."

"Now!" said Ellen, throwing open the doors of the press; "now—go."

Abel did not need a second summons.

"Along the walls—to the fir plantation—and in that, to the river. You will meet them; and *may God so deal with you as in this matter you deal with me!*"

Just escaped, as he was, from imminent and deadly peril, and all through the honourable feeling of the noble-hearted being who stood before him, Abel would have been worse than a demon to have planned at that moment a ruin that would have destroyed all she—lone and desolate as she was—held dear. The

delight of newly-given life was with him; the fresh, pure breeze of morning rushed around him. He glanced at the cabinet; but still he felt his position to be not entirely safe. In words, he blessed Ellen, and though she shuddered at such a blessing, it is but natural to believe that when he held up his hands towards her, after sliding from the window, that once—once—perhaps once only, stimulated by continuing peril, and appalled by the danger from which he had almost escaped,—surprised into gratitude by an excellence which, if he could not understand, he could marvel at, he meant really to express that which his words implied.

Ellen must have swooned, for when consciousness returned, she was on the floor, and Bran was licking her face. Was it a dream, or was the past reality? At first, the truth broke gradually on her mind;—the fire—Abel—Lawrence! Strange voices came from the glen of the river. Raising herself, she crawled on her knees towards the window. Armed men were in sight; some she fancied moving towards Spencer Court. The papers! pressed as they were upon her heart—still she might not be able to preserve them. The thought, rapid as lightning, rushed through her brain, and rising with difficulty, she left the room.

## CHAPTER XII.

### THE LOVE-HOPES.

The afternoon of a soft, warm, breezy day, was drawing towards evening. Beneath the thick yet tender shade of an avenue of fragrant lime trees walked a lady and gentleman, too much absorbed in each other to note external objects. The Lee—the loveliest of the many lovely rivers of Ireland—floated in silent gladness within a few yards of where they loitered. A full chorus of sweet voices of singing-birds freighted the air with melody—the fragrance of the richest wild-flowers had been pressed out by a herd of cattle passing along an adjoining meadow to the farm-yard, from whence were heard the cheerful lilt of the milkmaid, and the merry laugh of the cowboys. The landscape was closer than Irish landscapes usually are, and but that the gate through which the wanderers had passed into the avenue, hung upon one hinge, and the pillars were leaning in opposite directions, Edward Spencer might—if such a matter could have occupied a portion of his thoughts—have fancied himself in his own pros-

perous county, instead of in the wild and picturesque land of his fair companion—Lady Mary O'Brien.

He had, however, either forgotten that he had forwarded an announcement of his intended arrival at Spencer Court on the previous evening, or was altogether heedless of the anxiety the preparations for his visit must have occasioned the good Mrs. Myler and his expectant household. He was evidently intent on one object, and had no thought to bestow upon aught else.

"But will you not hear me?" he exclaimed, while attempting to regain the hand the lady had withdrawn —not from a spirit of coquetry, but because at the moment she was really and seriously displeased. "Will you not hear me?" he repeated.

"No, Sir," she replied, "I will not. There is nothing you can say on this subject that can be either agreeable or right for me to hear. You have broken your promise; made solemnly to me when we met, as you know, accidentally, at Clifton; that no matter where we might again meet, no matter how frequently, when or where, upon *that* subject your lips should be sealed for the next twelve months. Is it fair, is it just, is it honourable to pursue me here? to watch and trail, and track and follow me? I met you at dinner, and then you assured me you were to leave town immediately. I trusted to your word, and was entirely myself, because I believed in you. But when I found though your letters had arrived, that day after day *you* lingered where, owing to my brother's illness, I am compelled to remain, until he is sufficiently well to return home—when I find that I cannot leave his bed-

side in the house of the old friend who offered us this refuge out of the noise of the excited town, without being waylaid—"

"Waylaid!" repeated Edward.

"Certainly. I can find no other word to express my meaning; and if it offend you, how much more must the act offend me. You have degraded me by this persecution: you make me fear what even servants may say if they see me walking with you."

"We have known each other from childhood," observed Edward in a softened tone, "and before you became another's I loved you."

"You never told me so," she replied.

"But you knew it."

"The past has nothing to do with the present," she answered, "at least," she added, after a moment, "the past of our young days; but the past of my woman's life must have its control over my present and my future. Unless, for at least a year, we can meet without reference to—to the interdicted subject, we shall not meet at all. I see you mistook my unconstrained confidence in your promise, for a changing, perhaps a light mind."

"I should hardly expect forgiveness from above for such a sin as *that*," exclaimed Edward, passionately. "*You* light-minded! Oh no, I know the depth and earnestness and purity of your heart too well for that."

"I am," she continued, without heeding his interruption, "often light of word. Of a naturally cheerful spirit, and I would fain hope, a grateful mind; thankful for the good given, and the evil spared; I may seem

forgetful of the great sorrow of my still young life; but it is not so. He is often before me—by my side, not as a phantasy, but palpably; often I hear his voice, so low, and sweet, and solemn; and if I sing or say what would have have given him pleasure, or feel one of the higher and holier emotions of our better nature, then my heart beats more quickly, with the hope that the communion of heavenly with earthly spirits is no fancy —that he sees and sanctions what he so deeply loved."

"Another loved you longer and as tenderly," murmured Edward.

The tears in the lady's eyes flashed before him.

"You are selfish," she said, coldly; "when I am thinking of him, you are thinking of yourself. If you cannot simply be my friend during the next twelve-months we must meet no more. I wonder," she continued in a voice of more intense displeasure, "I wonder, with this band upon my cheek, and my sable weeds, that you dare persist. You know that when in your mother's house I never loved you; never regarded you, save as a brother."

"But you know such was not my feeling. From you, Mary, I first learned to love the land upon which we both stand. You were the first who opened my eyes to the wrongs inflicted by my country upon yours. You made me resolve, if my uncle's property ever became mine, to adopt your country as my own. So firm was this resolve, that if you had still been the wife of another, for your sake I would have cast my fortunes here. You have been many months your own mistress, and yet——"

"No more!" she said. "If you had avoided this topic, we might have taken counsel together for the good of this poor people; we might have thought with, and for each other; but your perseverance has prevented this. I cannot trust you."

"If you will only say, Lady Mary, that at the end of one, or even of two years, you will be mine—if you will simply say yes to this, I swear to you most solemnly, that I will never, during the interval, intrude upon you a single allusion to the hope upon which my existence depends. Oh, you know not what it is to drag on life without hope."

"Do I not," she answered, in a voice trembling with emotion. "Do I not! Alas! I have no sustaining hope for this world now. My natural buoyancy of spirit supports me; and my national contentment and sense of the demand society has upon the young to contribute to its happiness, call upon me to forget myself; but when the day is done, and I retire into my own heart, then indeed I am alone—alone, utterly and hopelessly—a creature who amuses without being amused—who scorns to ask the sympathy of tears, and whose heart is indeed buried with the past. With such feelings, could I make you the promise you require, when, at the end of the appointed year, I may be as I am now?"

"You assured me you would struggle against this," said Edward.

"And I do," she replied. "What you offer would tempt any one whose heart was not buried as mine is, in the deep sea. My father's difficulties, and his late

sorrow on my eldest brother's account, are crushing his head, untimely white, into the grave. My narrow means insult my rank, and confine me to the mere necessaries of life. You would at once make me rich, and mistress over the people I yearn to serve; yet, though I honour your generosity, and appreciate your love, I cannot return it. Leave me for a year; and believe, that if ever I give this hand again, it shall be yours. So far I promise, but no farther."

He bent his head, but made no answer.

"Edward," she added, "you seek a strange fortune —a hand without a heart—a woman of another faith —dowerless—and proud."

The young Englishman now poured forth his entreaties for a promise that the lady would be his wife—at some period—any period—no matter how distant: but nothing could change her determination. No one who knew Lady Mary only in society, would have imagined the bright beautiful creature so full of wit—so seemingly inconsistent, to be so steadfast—so high in principle and purpose. Edward's forgetfulness of all other engagements; his importunity, encouraged as it was at first by Lady Mary's frank and unconstrained bearing; his sudden and earnest protestations of affection; had quite a contrary effect to that for which he hoped. Their interview ended by her determination not to meet him on any terms, or under any promise he might make during the next twelve months; but she consented to receive his letters. He gained this point by a marvellous exercise of *tact*. He represented the difficulties he should meet with (she knew they

were more numerous than he anticipated); and promised only to write when he wanted advice as to the management of the people on his estate in these troubled times, or when perplexed by the readings of law and justice, which seemed to him so different from what are considered law and justice in England. Their casual meeting had revived all the passion of his early days, for the only woman he had ever loved with the intense earnestness of his calm deep heart. Edward's love was neither one of fancy nor of fashion—it was part and parcel of his existence. He loved Lady Mary before he knew what love was, her marriage struck him as with a mental palsy, all his faculties seemed for a time suspended, but he never breathed his disappointment to any living creature; he removed a tress of hair from his bosom, and replaced it there when he heard she was a widow. He said truly that he first loved Ireland for her sake; he might have added, that her slightest word was graven on his heart; that when, as a boy, while she was little more than a child, spending her school vacations at his mother's house, though he seldom played with her, he would treasure up every flower she gathered, repeat within himself the songs she sung, and trembled if she but touched his hand. The man's intercourse with the world never destroyed the feeling, though his habitual self-control diminished its apparent power; while she, seemingly so gay and thoughtless, nourished a memory which had been the romance of a few short months—a Juliet passion—as sudden, as intense, and yet all enduring. All that has been written in song, or told in story, of

love and its effects, falls far, far short of its reality. Its evils and its blessings, its impotence and its power, its sin and its holiness, its weakness and its strength, will continue the theme of nature and of art, until the great pulse of the universe is stilled. Arising from the depths of misery, descending from heaven the most direct and evident manifestation of a divine and self-sacrificing spirit, it is at once the tyrant and the slave. Happier as the latter than as the former, for the perfection of love is obedience; the power of obeying what we love is, at all events, the perfection of woman's happiness. And so Lady Mary had found it during the brief life of him she mourned beyond the power of words to express.

When Edward Spencer parted from her that evening, it was with a determination to do something—he did not at all know what, but something—that would surprise her into love! The reasoning and motives that effect ordinary women, could have no effect with her. She embodied the wild high romance of her country, with a feeling still more high and more holy; the more fascinating, because it was not manifested by any outward show of sentiment or exhibition of grief.

The romance of the one was deep and as fervent as that of the other. An ordinary observer could have fancied them formed to constitute each other's happiness; but while Edward had been captivated by the Irish maiden's brilliancy, she had not been touched by his worth. Had he been less perfect, she might have loved him; for certainly her husband, to whose memory she was so devoted—brave and distinguished though he was—had

yielded to outbursts of temper, and fits of despondency, that would have tried, and perhaps shaken, the love of an ordinary woman.

Edward Spencer had taken a boat to the lady's temporary retreat on the banks of the Lee; and when, after two painful interviews, he resumed his seat, the whole scene was as tranquil and beautiful as though the oars of the rowers dipt in the waters of an enchanted lake.

"We heard strange news, plase yer honour, from one who had it a minute agone from a travelling 'ooman. All Cork's astir wid it before this," said one of the men to Edward Spencer, who neither heard nor answered. But Irish loquacity is not easily checked, and he continued: "Why, then, maybe yer honour's strange to the country?"

"His honour's no such thing," interrupted a third person, whom, if Edward had observed, he would at once have recognised as the Blarney car-driver. "His honour's no such thing; and more betokens, he knew Abel Richards better than yerself. Didn't he 'crass' with him and the sweet lady he's just been visiting, God bless her!"

Mr. Spencer heard *that*, and felt his cheek flush.

"That's just the way, Jim," continued the carman, who sat where he ought to steer; "that's just the way the flowers do be growing—the nettle be the side of the primrose, and the bouchlawn forenint the violet."

"Is it himself," said the younger rower in a lowered tone, "that's the nettle?" and his eye glanced towards Edward.

"Faix no; but Abel Richards, that was."

"And none to say, 'rest his sowl!' Oh, then, isn't it shocking for any one to live through five-and-forty years of this life, and lave no one behind to say, 'rest his sowl!'"

"Whose soul?" inquired Edward.

"The sowl of that flinty-hearted nagur, Abel Richards, plaze yer honour, whose place tuck fire yesterday evening, and burnt him and every thing belonging to him, stock and lock, barn and brick, cattle and fowl, last night—so I heerd tell."

"And I'll go bail, they'll set the report about that it was the Whiteboys' doings," said one of the oarsmen.

"Sorra a surer thing than that you ever said," was the comment of another.

"Abel Richards," repeated Edward Spencer. "Did you say burnt to death?"

"Musha, ay. What else? and small loss. The fire took what the starvation left. Though, while there's so much false swearing in the country, and the soldiers ready for murder, I wouldn't be surprised if some poor innocent boys war hung for it!"

The account of the burning, with a lengthened character of Abel Richards' extortions and injustice, was eagerly and carefully repeated to Edward Spencer, who, at any other time, must have noted how utterly careless the narrator was of murder, and how completely, like Biddy Doyle, he identified himself with the party that considered destruction a duty.

"Setting a case," he said, "that they did consort together, and punish the hard-hearted 'reprobate,' who

had ' massacred' the country without judge or jury, for many a year, who could say wrong they did? Sure they knew well enough there was no justice for them; nor never would be, while things staid as they were."

Edward would have combated, with as much judgment as kindness, this opinion, but his mind was otherwise occupied. At one moment his spirits sank, and he who had been so full of enthusiasm for the country a few brief days before, though he would not confess it to himself, wondered why, in defiance of the counsel and wishes of his friends, he had ventured to Ireland when it was in its present " disturbed state." Yet this was but a passing thought; his determination to do " something" that should win the approbation and love of her who loved her native land with the untarnished affection of brave descent and unchanging truth, rushed through his mind, and was succeeded by a return of the right principle, of affording protection and careful watching to those who " laboured on his land." The unconnected fragments he had heard of the outbreak near Spencer Court, which at any other time would have stirred him up to inquiry, and induced observation, passed almost unheeded; and quitting his boat, he was walking mechanically towards the hotel, when the carman, taking advantage of a crowd which impeded Mr. Spencer's progress, whispered,

" Plaze yer honour!" Edward turned round hastily, for he was in an irritable humour, and became annoyed at being followed, and there stood Darby. " One that wishes yer honour well, bid me give this to ye yester-

day morning, but I didn't." He presented Edward with a twisted scrap of paper.

"And why did you not?" said Mr. Spencer.

"Bedad, Sir, because there was no occasion. I knew yer honour had countermanded the horses ye'd ordered the night before; and I says to myself, 'His honour's a resolute gintleman,' says I, 'and one that, if ye tell him not to do a thing would be sure to do it, just to show he's resolute;' but any way, ye wouldn't have reached the place last night. We settled all that safe for yer honour; for if any thing"—he drew close to Mr. Spencer, so close as to speak almost in his ear—"if any little accident had happened you just through a mistake, when the boys' blood was up (and they're liable to accidents), we'd have been fairly heart-broken; faix I wouldn't have bothered yer honour at all with her 'bit of writin,' only for the promise I made her; and maybe yer honour'll give it back to me now. It's all one, for it's as much as I could do to read it, let alone yer honour."

"And did you dare to read a letter directed to me?" inquired Mr. Spencer, as much perplexed as provoked at the coolness and strangeness of the man's communication.

"Ah, thin, sure, Sir," he answered, "if I didn't read it, how would I know what was in it?"

Edward could hardly forbear smiling at the *naïveté* or impudence of his acquaintance, who seemed to think himself privileged to thwart his movements and read his letters. And while he was debating what to say, Darby exclaimed,

"Whisht! it's not manners for me to be discoorsing this way, we might be suspected—and Lord save us, if there isn't the soldiers!" Darby did not wait to finish his sentence, but lost himself in the mob, who were inspecting preparations for the departure of a coach for the west; in more than their usual numbers, and strange to say, in almost silence.

They saw the guard was doubly armed, and they intimated their knowledge of the fact to each other, rather by signs than words. When the horses were to, and one passenger inside, a policeman took his station on the roof of the machine, his appearance was greeted by a yell as of a hundred demons, which did not cease nor diminish until the coach drove off; then there was a bustle in the streets, usually so encumbered with masses of idlers. The beggars forgot to beg, and asked for what the Irish always covet—news. Some said one thing, some another; but all agreed that there had been a dreadful deal of destruction. Each shop door had its little knot of such zealous talkers that there seemed no listeners; let the news be what it might, all rejoiced to have something that was new to talk about. A stranger in Ireland is always astonished as much as attracted by noticing pretty, and really modest faces looking out of open windows; young ladies who blush at being stared at never scruple to stare their eyes full, and Edward thought he never saw so many respectable females in his life before, gazing from their houses into a public street. Every casement was open to catch "the news," and fair necks bent forward, and ringlets floated without control; there was more anxiety manifested to

hear what was going forward than horror at the greatly exaggerated circumstances detailed with such eloquence and gesticulation. Presently a detachment of military marched into the street where Edward lingered, followed by a much larger gathering of fierce and excited people; shaking their dissevered rags in mockery, pointing their long fingers which starvation had rendered fleshless towards the self-possessed soldiers, hooting and execrating them as they continued their even tramp—tramp—tramp—and shouting out in their emphatic idiom and harsh voices, most bitter taunts mingled with sarcasms keen as cutting: inquiries as to the amount of bravery that was required to murder a woman, or fire "a house full of childre." Any one would have imagined that it was they who had perpetrated the late crimes, instead of being made the instruments to punish them.

Edward could hardly believe that this was the same mob, consisting of the self-same helpless people, who that morning had whined forth their solicitations for "a halfpenny for God's sake, to help the price of a weight of potatoes to save us from starving."

Suddenly several, flushed, heated, and strange men appeared amongst them; men who seemed to have travelled a long way, and who grasped their shillalas with strength and determination. Mr. Spencer did not see in what direction they came, but his quick observant eye recognised three or four such amongst the crowd. Some spoke loud in their native language, others low and whispering; but whatever they communicated had the effect of immediately stopping the human tide;

the soldiers were permitted to continue their march free from the insults and excitation which was converting the smile of disdain into the frown of revenge, and impelled apparently by one feeling, the crowd directed their course along the Mall in the direction of the gaol. The suddenness of this movement was afterwards explained to Edward—they had learned that several Whiteboys were in custody and were about being committed to the county prison. This accounted at once for the diversion which allowed the military to proceed on their way.

"There'll be more murders done than the upset of a post-boy, that's neither flesh nor fowl, as a body may say, Mr. Spencer, dear!" exclaimed the rich brogue of Mrs. Counsellor Hackett, who grasped his hand and shook it as heartily as if she were his godmother, and had not seen him for at least twenty years, "that there will dear, or the burning of ould Richards either—though he's not burnt they say; so the black gentleman (it's not manners to name the other word) hasn't got him yet—the ugly turncoat. Doesn't it prove the slavery the country's in, to see them red coats marching through its heart's blood afther a bit of a fire that's out these twice twelve hours? And then having it for a cloak just to hunt the poor innocent mountain boys and string them up like red herrings! Oh, Sir, don't look at me that way, as if yer heart was turning against the people, afther my taking as good as forty oaths you were one of us, and the counsellor grigging me, as if I got no strength for my words out of the 'grass greens,' to say nothing

of a lady that shall be nameless. Well, I hope you'll be as happy at the end of twenty-five years as me and the counsellor, that never would have a word, only a little syllable now and again, when he puts too much stiffness in his fifth tumbler—not that it does him any harm, only on account of keeping up his dignity. And, indeed," she added, with something of an offended air, being too much occupied with her own eloquence to observe the Englishman's flushing cheek or indignant glances, "indeed, if ye'd taken a turn in the court-house ye'd have seen worse sights than the counsellor in his glory. It's work enough he'll have at the 'sizes, defending the poor boys after this—the cratures that have no friend in the law but himself! hard work, and a trifle of pay that wouldn't powder his wig; next, neighbour to nothing, as one may say, only for the prayers—the holy prayers, Mr. Spencer, of the poor, that are showered down on him. And as I say to him sometimes, 'Phill, darling, never heed the pay, the prayers will tell up in the long run—and they'll be less wanted when the time comes.'"

Edward bowed off Mrs. Hackett as politely as he could, and on regaining his apartment at length, he found a note from Mr. Graves, who, despite the disturbances, had gone down to the country on the day originally fixed for his departure. The letter was wise as kind, inviting him to his house, saying that he thought his presence in the neighbourhood just then might be productive of great good, and reiterating his old request "not to judge harshly of the people."

Edward Spencer had hoped much from his interview with Lady Mary; but any further attempt to win her

to a promise or extort one from her in her present mood would completely destroy whatever hope he still cherished. His zeal in the country's cause had been marvellously overshadowed during the last few days by his love—the very love which now stimulated him to plunge at once into the troubled district, where he believed it was his duty to be. He was certainly strengthened in this resolve by his earnest and entire desire to be of use; to protect his tenantry; to throw himself into the breach as it were; and not without a sudden hope to find himself in some delicate and peculiar position where he should be obliged to ask the advice of one so thoroughly acquainted with the country as Lady Mary O'Brien.

As to his *ménage*, it had been in strange confusion. One of his servants, a stupid, burly, lout, who had never been sober since he landed in Cork, took occasion to say, he was very sorry, but it occurred to him that he had a mother and four sisters dependant on his exertions, and so he would rather go home: he would relinquish a month's wages sooner than remain in the country. The other, a delicate sentimental coxcomb in livery, did not give warning, but demanded increased wages "to pay an insurance on his life for the benefit of his family." This cool impertinence Mr. Spencer resisted by giving him his dismissal, and applied to the landlord of the hotel to recommend him servants, who would at all events suit him for the present: which he had done, with the gratuitous observations upon those he had parted with, "that though they were mighty neat in

themselves, he'd defy any of the Irish servants to be more idle; and that it was exceeding troublesome for the peace of a house, to mix them; it was so natural for them to hate each other. It was better," he insinuated, "to have them all English, or all Irish," that like every thing else, there could be no medium, "they must all drive the same way, or there'd be murder among them."

Certainly nothing could be in richer contrast than his past and present attendants; the former, quiet, calm, independent—building their own respectability on their own foundation; understanding perfectly the compact of "pay me my wages, for which you shall have as small a proportion of work as is necessary to keep my place, if it be worth my while to do so!" Neither their foot nor voice was ever heard, they seldom disappointed their master, nor ever hurried themselves; never were guilty of a rudeness to a well-dressed visiter, and never felt an emotion of gratitude towards their employer. And Edward was deep in his preparations when a gentleman of the highest possible Tory principles called upon him, and drew such a picture of the hopeless atrocity of all who belonged to what, in Ireland, may justly be called the *opposite* faith; urged the doctrine of proselytism or extermination (he did not seem to care which) so vehemently; talked so long and so loud; that Edward, always given to dreams, passed a miserable night. At one time he was guided by the angel of mercy, who had taken the form of Lady Mary, into a vast arena where a multitude were assembled: too late to save a number of

unhappy beings whom Abel Richards and the pope had tied to a stake, and had fired the faggots that surrounded it. Again, he was dancing a mad reel on the heather, to music produced by invisible musicians; and was awakened at six o'clock by James, whom he had told not to call him till eight.

His new people, particularly his "personal" servant, were in a fever of anxiety from morning till night. His "man" had already established his position among his associates by reference to his master as "a born gentleman from head to foot every turn of him showed what he was, saying thank ye, even for a bottle of that dirty trash of soda water, and letting him eat fresh meat every day—but the one—in the week;" his very existence seemed to depend upon his master's smiles, and nothing could induce Edward to overlook his blunders, but the ready wit with which he accounted for them. He was always disappointing his master, yet always in haste to do what he had left undone, never took into account his own exertions, was noisy both with foot and voice, but declared before he had been twenty-four hours in his service, that "he only wished he had an opportunity of travelling barefoot from Cape Clear to the Giant's Causeway to serve so good a master and (what an Irishman always over-values) so *raale* a gentleman."

## CHAPTER XIII.

### THE INDUCTION TO OUTRAGE.

Settling accounts and departing from an English and an Irish inn are two very different things. At the former all matters are well ordered and in time; the packing-cases and carpet-bags are moved with so little noise that they appear to have moved themselves; nobody helps any body, for all seem to know their own work—and *do it*, not from any interest they take in the voyager, but simply because such is their business. At the latter, nothing is ever precisely arranged, and, certainly, never in time. The sundries are stirred by an immense degree of noise and bustle; for here every body will help every body, and nobody has a rightly defined idea as to his own particular line of duty. Then the waiters are, each and all, so anxious that the traveller should be comfortable, and "sit asy," and on the right side to see "the beautiful country, God bless it!" and hope that the weather will "hould up," and that "the teems o' rain won't be bothering his honour;" with a direct question as to "When his honour will be

travelling this road again?" and "Maybe he'll be back soon,"—and all this proceeds from a natural and perfectly unaffected desire for the good of a stranger. They do not, to be sure, cherish the feeling for any great length of time, but it is strong enough while it lasts; and it is something to know that you excite even momentary interest in the living, beating, hearts of those you meet in your every day journeyings through a rugged world.

John Bull cheats in sober earnest; Paddy does it for fun. It comes, as far as the stranger's mere pocket is concerned, to pretty much the same thing in the end.

Paddy coaxes out the smallest of silver coins, with his most winning smiles, his most brilliant wit, or most insinuating humour; John aims at half-crowns and half-sovereigns, not with smiles, but frowns, not with wit, but grumblings, and if honestly and perfectly satisfied, never says so with a cheerful countenance; while Paddy, if not sufficiently remunerated still blesses "yer honour," hints that he "knows it's yer honour's intention to remember he has a wife and a housefull of little children at home praying this very minute that yer heart may soften, and that the prayers of the poor may make you an asy bed in heaven;" and if an evident difference of opinion exists between you—he thinking he has not been sufficiently recompensed, while you consider he has been paid "twice too much"—Paddy smiles complacently on his small exchequer, and then, as the sigh rises from his heart, adds to the last blessing he bestows, the earnest prayer, "that times

may mend, and not be so hard on the poor ever and always."

The number of servants at Irish, are usually nearly double the number of those at English, inns; but then half the amount satisfies the one that would satisfy the other, and you get all the blessings for nothing, with an influx of ideas in tropes and figures,—combined with such racy humour as can be found in no other country under the sun. By a single figure of speech they elucidate a fact or produce a fiction; and by a word or two judiciously spoken, place a subject in so ridiculous a light, that you laugh frequently against your own will; always against your judgment. If the stranger's sojourn at the inn has been but of a few days, it is most likely his departure will be wailed as a misfortune, he hears murmurs on all sides of "Ah, then, it's not often we've the blessing of such fine company, good luck to your honour, and God send ye safe back." "Success to ye wherever you go, and may yer heart grow lighter and yer purse heavier the longer you live." "God bless you, Sir, and mark you to grace and bring you here safe and soon." Even the "*sculleen*," the little boy "about the place," who does every one's business, and is scolded for every one's neglect—even he, the barefooted urchin whose curly head was never covered by a hat, and whose feet are swift and sure by day or night to do the bidding of all who please to command—even he lingers without, in the hope of receiving a stray sixpence, and gives his prayer whether he receives any thing for it or not.

In England, the landlord is ever at hand to bow his most respectful adieus; but in Ireland, he may be off with the hounds, or out shooting, or fishing, or gone to his country-house, or to the sea-side; or somewhere that prevents his seeing after his own business—supporting one of "his party" at a parish election—in short, anywhere but where English notions say he should be. Mr. Spencer, however, was fortunate; for his landlord was on the spot, and singularly serviceable in clearing a passage for him through the beggars, who were more vociferous and importunate than ever. He got rid of them by a *ruse*, giving the "head waiter" a guinea to divide amongst them, thus directing their attention to him. His Tory friend of the past day, leaning into the carriage-window, entreated him to wait until evening, and then he could have the escort of some troops who were going to Killarney; but he assured him of his sense of security and laughed at his fears; upon which his acquaintance retreated with a shrug of despair.

Some little delay arose from the restiveness of one of the horses, who, to Edward's surprise, were evidently high-spirited, well-fed creatures, though restive and impatient, and any thing but regular roadsters; and though the harness was not bright it was sound and strong. The door and steps were crowded by all connected with the hotel; the beggars in a state of fearful excitement and insubordination, surrounded the waiter, who had not yet changed the guinea into "testers" for their accommodation. More than once Mr. Spencer looked among the crowd for Darby the car-driver,

but instead, he saw the blooming face of Mrs. Counsellor, enshrined in a bonnet of pea-green silk, while her ample shoulders were enveloped in a pale blue shawl figured over with many colours. There she stood, kissing her hand and waving a handkerchief; taking advantage of the withdrawal of the beggars, and the exchanging a horse that contented itself with kicking for one more peaceably disposed, she in her turn darted to the window.

"God bless you, Mr. Spencer! don't fear, dear, the people are all lambs, and sure you'll not let them be led to the slaughter. They'll be stringing them like bades, Sir, only we depind on *you*—our trust is in you, Sir. What would we have faith in, if not in the grass-greens? Don't let them Orange devils put their *comether* on you, don't Sir, for the love of mercy, listen to a word they say. It's asy to bring a poor man to ruin in this country, and call it bringing him to justice; just always keep in mind that the poor have no friends." And then in an instant changing her tone, and darting a look full of the most fiery scorn upon a pale creature, who with her child hanging on her bosom, stretched out her emaciated hand to Edward Spencer, she exclaimed, "Keep out of the way of my feet, Mary Mulcahy; I'm ashamed of ye, ye brazen-face. I declare I'll have ye taken, so I will, to *dare* to meet the daylight with yer sin in yer arms."

The pale creature pressed her child more closely, and Mrs. Counsellor continued, "Is it a crown piece you've given her, Mr. Spencer! Oh, then, it's fine time the

beggars have, that ought to be whipt out of the streets. You don't know her as I do, or you would not encourage her."

"Why," said Edward, "you yourself, my good lady, told me just now, always to keep in mind that the poor had no friends."

"Oh, ay, the poor fellows they pick out, you understand, for their party to sacrifice, not such rubbish as these, that think no more of pushing against a lady's bran new shawl than they would of a stone wall."

"Bedad! yer wrong there, ma'am," said a dwarf, who dragged his deformities, only half hidden by his rags, from beneath the carriage, "we know a lady when we see her, whether she has a bran new shawl or not, and though my eyesight's very good—the Lord be praised for it!—the sorra a lady I'm looking at now," and he fixed his large animal eyes upon the woman, who only remembered the poor when they were of her "party."

"Sir," said the landlord at the opposite window, "we're all right now, we've got another horse. There's the priest of Blarney bowing to you."

Edward took off his hat, and stretched his arm out to shake hands with the hearty and friendly priest. The greeting was brief; and the landlord had only time to add, "I had much pleasure in appointing the post-boy you wished for," when the horses dashed forward. The crowd shouted, the landlord bowed, the multitude at the door bowed and curtsied, and the last glimpse Edward had of Mrs. Hackett was her substantial hand waving her as substantial handkerchief. Edward threw

himself back; and in doing so crushed a basket that had been thrust into the corner of the carriage, and which, upon examination, he found to contain a cold chicken, bread, biscuits, cakes, a bottle of wine, ham; in short, pic-nic provision for two days' campaigning, provided without order or charge by the provident landlord; a common occurrence in Ireland, and one sure to be appreciated when the comfortless state of provisions at the country inns five-and-twenty years ago is held in remembrance. On the road from Cork to Macroom nothing attracted Edward's attention, until he obtained a distant view of the tower of the Abbey of Kilcrea, looking over the green trees that cluster in front of the time-honoured pile.

The post-boy lessened his speed, as if conscious that the gentleman took an interest in antiquities; and the servant, in reply to his master's question, told him what it was, and seemed very anxious that he should turn off the high road to visit it, informing him that Master Matt, the ould follower of his honour's family, was everlastingly "rooting" after treasure there, and that it was a fine place "entirely." Edward was, however, now as anxious to get forward, as he had previously been to delay, and on went the horses with as much speed as if they had not travelled a mile.

Some little time before his arrival at Macroom traces of the fatal disturbances he had heard of were but too distinctly visible. The blackened and still smouldering walls of a cabin, which had evidently been burnt by the military, arrested his attention. A ghastly-looking dog, of large size, wounded and bleeding, sat gazing at

the ruins, perhaps the only survivor of the wretched household. Further on was a still more distressing evidence of martial law; a group of women were wringing their hands, howling, and weeping most bitterly over the inanimate form of a man, who had evidently met with a violent death.

Edward ordered the driver to stop. "They murdered him like a dog, without judge or jury, for nothing," was the only explanation he could receive. "They murdered him under the tree his father planted, and where his children played." He inquired the cause, but could obtain no fact. "They took him out of his bed and murdered him—in the sight of his wife; whose arms they untwisted from round his neck—*with a bayonet*." He *saw* that this was desperately true; for though she was in a swoon on his body, her hands were cut and bleeding.

It was a scene that made his senses reel, and his firm heart tremble. He collected himself sufficiently to inquire the name of the place, of the man, and at what hour, and by whom, the act of violence (he could not consider it an act of justice) had been committed, and noted them down; then, leaving the weepers some money, he ordered the postilion to drive fast—faster—into Macroom. It was really agonising to recall this scene, and contrast it with the natural beauty of the country; Edward closed his eyes, as if to prevent external objects distracting his ideas, and endeavoured to collect his senses. That there must have been provocation, he entertained no doubt; but he felt indignant at the unnatural combination of justice and cruelty.

As they drove into the straggling town of Macroom, every creature seemed in a state of confusion and distress, such as it is impossible to describe. A sort of half-maniac, half-idiotic insanity appeared to possess the people, while the military, evidently waiting for orders, wore an air of defiance and ferocity, before which some crouched, and at which others laughed. The multitude appeared to consist only of two classes of persons, paupers and soldiers. It was with difficulty that the carriage drew up to the inn door, and there Edward saw one or two gentlemen endeavouring to make their way through the crowd, so as to get round the corner of the building into the gate leading to Macroom Castle,—at that time the residence of one of the most hospitable and worthy representatives of the old class of Irish country gentlemen.

"Clear the road for the justices of the *pace*," shouted an herculean model of the class half knave, half fool, and whole beggar. "Clear the road for the *pace*, or the soldiers will do it with grape shot and *bagganetts*."

"Fire and soord—fire and soord to drive out starvation!" shouted an idiot; and then suddenly fixing his eyes on Mr. Spencer, he exclaimed, "There's a pale gentleman—a strange pale gentleman, that looks pity at us. Give us a halfpenny to buy pratees: we're all quiet as lambs if ye'll give us the maaley pratees."

Edward asked to be shown into a private room, but was told there was not one in the house; they were all occupied by gentlemen and officers, and visiters belonging to "the castle." He entered the least crowded, and found a seat at a window looking over the stable-yard,

that was backed by the fine old trees of Macroom Castle. He took out the memorandum he had made of the incident on the road, and the name of the person killed, and was considering how he should proceed with the inquiry he had determined to institute, when his name was pronounced by the well-remembered voice of the good old clergyman.

"I thought it most likely you would pass through to-day," he said; "and that alone would have brought me to Macroom, if other and more painful duties had not demanded my presence here. It is many years since I have known the country to be really in a state of such frightful turmoil; not one or two cases of insurrection, but all is in commotion. You have, of course, heard of the destruction of our fellow-voyager's house. He himself was escorted to Macroom Castle—popular feeling is so greatly against him—by a party of soldiers. We are all going in there to hear news, and to take examinations. You must permit me to introduce you. Do not feel any delicacy at entering a house which is open to every stranger, and the hospitality of which—the moment a scout had informed its master of your arrival—would have been forced upon you before you had time to change horses. Macroom Castle is literally 'the Hotel of the West.' Besides, you will see much that you ought to see; all our gentry, that is, those who are in the country, will be there, and it will be well for you to know them."

Edward could not avoid mentioning the terrible scene he had witnessed. Mr. Graves shook his head.

"Very sad—very sad," he said. "We must inquire into it; but depend on it, it was provoked."

"Provoked, Sir," repeated the young Englishman, indignantly. "Provoked! what provocation could justify violence such as that? It seems to me a case of murder."

"We will inquire," replied the dean; adding, "it is a strange request to make to an Englishman, that he should keep cool; but I see it is a necessary one for you. You will find individuals of only one party assembled here, and all influenced, more or less, by the state of the country."

"But surely both parties are interested in the preservation of the peace," said Edward.

"We would hope so. But the sooner we make our way into the castle the better," was the reply.

Knowing the dean's benevolent feelings towards the people, and how entirely he deserved their respect and affection, Edward was surprised and grieved to observe that they avoided him; and if they did not impede his progress, did not make way, or facilitate his object. Usually ready to bless, few blessed him then. Hints were murmured that he was "consorting" with their enemies; and the mob outside the castle gate seemed inclined to force its way into the enclosure—indeed so great was the pressure against the entrance, that the man within hesitated about opening it.

"You are astonished, I see," said Mr. Graves, "at the strange looks and cold salutations I encounter. It is only when under some momentary excitement they

receive me thus. The Irish character, constitution, feeling, principle, call it what you will, admits of no medium thoughts—no deliberative reasonings. 'Those who are not with us, are against us,' is their motto. They never look, *or believe in any one who looks*, at both sides of a question."

This was said in an under tone; and while the clergyman's steady eye met the daring, the angry, the sinister, or the humble gaze of people, in various stages of excitement—suddenly an elderly gentleman advanced slowly towards the gate. There was an instantaneous change in the manner of the crowd. Those who had hats, took them off; those who had none, pulled their forelocks and scraped their feet; the women muttered prayers in English and Irish; the boys shouted—and then there was a general "Whisht, 'tis himself that's in it—Wh-is-ht!" and all was silent. There was a mingling of dignity and freedom, the jovial look of the hunting field with the polish of the courtier, in the gentleman's carriage and presence. Nodding familiarly to Mr. Graves, and lifting his hat to Mr. Spencer, he stood for a moment so as to be seen by those without—giving them time to perceive that his bearing was firm and good tempered—and then said, "Well, boys, and what do you want now? Not potatoes, for you had a fair allowance of them this morning."

"God bless yer honour, we had full and plenty—God increase your store. If all was like you, there'd be no want in the country," was the immediate response. "And sure only for your honour, we would have been dead alive with the hunger long ago."

"And yet you will not suffer my friend, the dean, (who, by the way, is your friend as much as he is mine,) to pass in, though he has a strange gentleman with him. I am quite ashamed of you."

"Oh, Sir, that wasn't it at all; by no manes, yer honour. We war just waiting to see the man yer honour knows is in it, and that oughtn't to be there—that we might rise a good yell at him, yer honour."

"And why do you want to do *that?*" inquired the gentleman.

"Why? Why then it's yerself, Sir, that needn't ask that, for it's the first time yer honour's castle gate ever opened to him."

"Boys," said the Master of Macroom. "Boys, is it now, for the first time, you have to learn, that whatever a man's faults or sins may be, *when he is in distress* the gates of Macroom Castle are never shut against him?" He spoke in a clear distinct voice, and it was responded to by a loud hearty shout; the shouters leaping in the air, tossing up their hats, whirling their shillalas, and shaking their rags in a frenzy of delight. Taking advantage of this momentary excitement, Mr. Spencer and the dean walked into the avenue, and the master continued,

"Any violence on your part must operate against you, because it will prejudice the gentlemen who meet here to-day—not to injure you, but to protect themselves; it will prejudice them against you."

"But that fellow within, Sir, will be pisoning ye with all sorts and sizes of lies. Sure there's as good as a score of poor innocent boys sent out of the country

through his means in the last five or six years, to say nothing of the houseless and homeless craythurs that's wandering and hungry through his villany; and if he had his way and his will, sorra a one standing at this gate this blessed day whose skull he wouldn't send to keep company with them poor monnuments over the ould coort-house—of the fine boys that suffered for shortening the days of ould Hamilton. Sure, it's a sin in a Christian country to see their white bones in the air."

"And my beautiful boy one of them, and to lose his young life for such an ould man?" exclaimed a withered woman, clapping her hands, and concluding her sentence with an ullagown, in which several voices joined.

"This is very extraordinary!" whispered Edward Spencer to Mr. Graves, "glorying in their relationship to a murderer."

"They would not confess to any kindred with a thief," was the reply; "they would thank God that all their people were poor and honest, and that if they did get into misfortune, it was not for what they need be ashamed to own. They have a sort of fatality-feeling about murder, thinking it is before them—their destiny —and, alas! too frequently, their duty. Listen."

"I think," resumed the Master of Macroom, "that I have been sufficiently long your friend to be trusted, and am not likely to see any injustice done to you."

"Injustice!" repeated a stalwart-looking fellow, strong of mind and limb, with a concentrated expression of countenance—an expression implying more firmness than fierceness. "Injustice! oh, death alive, Sir! if

you give any attintion to him or his we are all done for. Sure, you know I wouldn't tell yer honour a lie; and I could prove an alibi for every man that black villain will mark—I know I could; but what we're all willing as life to stand to, is, if yer honour would just listen to us, and not mind him or his at all. Sure, yer honour, when an alibi is proved every thing going before is disproved; and sorra a one of the gentlemen will stand aginst yer honour, if yer honour only chooses. Sure, ye'r the top of the country, we all know that. Isn't it plain, yer honour, that if the boys accused warn't in it, they warn't—isn't that plain, Sir?"

"Very—but not true. How do you know against whom informations may be sworn?"

"Oh, Sir, that's asy known—every one he has a spite too—and that's every one he injured; and sorra a one hardly in the country that he has not done an ill turn to."

"No, no," exclaimed the master, with a wave of his hand, "but the country cannot remain in its present disturbed state; nothing can be attempted to lift you out of the poverty into which you are plunged until this fever—this terrible tumult—subsides. Nothing can be done for you, while the lives of those who would give you bread are endangered by coming amongst you."

"True for you, Sir; but sure we never do hurt or harm to man or mortal, barring *they keep on at us*, and then, Sir, then you know how long we trust in the Lord, and shut our mouths against both starvation and words, and chain down our hands and look our misery and hunger in the face. Oh, Sir, none knows this

better than yer honourable self, and sure you won't turn again' us now."

The gentleman was visibly affected, for it was impossible to look at the impassioned speaker and not feel. At last he said,

"I'll never turn against those who conduct themselves peaceably; but you must respect the laws, and leave it to them to judge and punish. Your violence will destroy you in the end."

"Ah yah!" he exclaimed, "the law that punishes one side rewards the other without thinking of justice; the judging ever and always leans to the power; and if violence destroys us in the end, peaceableness has destroyed us without an end. You mean well to us, Sir, and so does Mr. Graves, I'll own that, *but you are not one of us*—God forbid you war. Oh, then! I wonder the roof of the *Caislean-i-Fhliom* isn't raised right up from its walls this blessed night with the lies of Aby Richards—he'll swear against every man he has a grudge and a spite to in Munster; and he's as deep as he's dangerous."

"You speak," interrupted the Master of Macroom, "as if the burning of Mr. Richards' house was the sole instance of outrage. You, Jem Murphy," and he fixed his eyes on the speaker, "know better than that. Have you forgotten the poor post-boy's murder; the forcing open house after house for arms; the destruction, and riving, and marauding; the threats, and night disturbances? I tell you once and for all there must be an end of it, and if reason won't do it, force must."

"There never was a finger raised in the country

against yer honour, or one belonging to you—I ask yer honour's self, is there ever a lock turned upon one of yer honour's doors? and it isn't turning away from us you'd be?" said Murphy, in a whining tone.

"I'll never turn from either friend or foe," said the gentleman. "You know how steady I've been to you; you know that nothing ever turned me, as you call it—and nothing ever shall turn me—" There was a shout, which the gentleman instantly quelled by exclaiming "Silence," in a voice that could have been heard a very long way off. "Hear me to the end," he said, "nothing shall change me, but your own violence and disregard of the laws of your country. I warn you most earnestly not only against any act of violence, but against assembling in a manner that will lead to violence. If you commit an outrage I cannot save you. Go home peaceably, and by so doing prove that no outrage can be laid at your door; go home, if you would save yourselves and your families from ruin."

There was a dead silence. "Go home, my friends, quietly, I entreat you," he repeated. "Go home; I can gain nothing by this advice—on the contrary, boys, I shall be a loser," and the look of stern and even haughty command which his expressive features had assumed was changed for one of infinite humour: "I shall be a great loser; for you will go home, and instead of a parcel of idle lazy vagabonds being swept away, you will be coming for the cutlings for the gruel, and the drop of wine for Molly and the new baby; and I shall have you all down upon me for potatoes, and blankets, and thatch, and wattles and some-

thing to pay the priest, in as great numbers as if the soldiers had never paid you a visit. I really think you had better stay and be shot."

This ironical advice had more effect upon the miserable yet mirth-loving mob, than the gentleman's reasoning. They liked the jest and the jester, and they separated, at least for a little time, with sundry exclamations of "What a mighty pleasant man his honour was, and sure it was a great blessing intirely to have the like of him in the country;" and so they took his advice, until moved by some new excitement, or, made to think differently by another speaker, they re-assembled and forgot the counsel of their best friend.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### THE SPY.

It is always much easier to get a number of Irish country gentlemen together for amusement than for the dispatch of business—*mere* business; and though the lives and properties of many were at stake, yet the meeting bore too close an affinity to abstract thought to be very interesting to the majority, who gradually strolled off to inspect the kennels, bet upon some favourite horse in "the master's" stables, or dip a line in the beautiful river Sullane that waters the domain, or for any other purpose that might wile them away from serious occupation.

Edward was surprised to perceive that those who lingered in the dining-room were much more full of mirth and mischief, than care or concern; and more ready to jest, than to look grave, upon the state of the country. They all, however, shook him cordially by the hand, and it was his fault, but not theirs, if he did not feel as much at home with them in five minutes as he would have done with his own countrymen in as many months.

Before the entire party—who, after various messengers had been dispatched for them, came dropping in by twos and threes—were assembled, he took occasion to tell his host of the outrage he had witnessed on the road.

"My dear Sir," exclaimed one who was amusing himself by tossing fragments of oaten bread into a dog's mouth, "the fact is, you are new to the country, and do not understand our ways."

Edward turned so abruptly round on the speaker, while his deep intelligent eye inquired, more eloquently than words could have done, the meaning of what he had said, that the dean laid his hand on his arm.

"The fellow, depend upon it, deserved what he got, or he would not have got it," added the speaker.

"But his life has been taken, Sir," replied Edward; "and surely the military are not suffered to rough ride through a country, and butcher whom they please."

"Really, Sir," said a blustering, burly, jovial-looking 'squire in top boots, a blue coat and buff waistcoat, "Really, Sir, where we have so much to investigate that is important, I cannot see the use of occupying time about what is not—bothering and confusing one thing with another."

"Easy, easy, my good friend," interrupted as jovial and good-tempered "a spark of the Emerald" as any in the hall. "Easy, I say. From the notes Mr. Spencer made on the spot, which our reverend friend the dean has just shown me, I'm thinking it's one of my tenants that's shot, and one that never was a gale behind; and I must have it seen into immediately."

"But, Sir," observed Edward, "what does it matter whose tenant he was—he was a man and a subject."

"A Papist rebel, I'll go bail," interrupted a voice.

"Well, Sir," said Edward, "and if he was, he had as good a right to the protection afforded by the laws of his country as either you or I—he had a right to a fair trial."

"Bathershin!" exclaimed the same rough and thundering voice.

"I do not understand what the gentleman means," observed Edward, with a look of inquiry to the dean, who only smiled.

"What do you mean by calling a tenant of mine a 'Papist rebel,'" said the gentleman who was, with Dean Graves, looking over Mr. Spencer's notes.

"What I say," replied the county colossus, as, striding forward from amid a group who indulged in the bad habit of standing round the fire, or the fire-place, he marched across the room, and looked the querist full in the face. "A Papist rebel, I'll go bail," he repeated; "and as to such a fellow having a right to a fair trial, or a trial of any kind, I deny it in toto. A trial! Cock a Papist up with a fair trial indeed! If I had my own will and way, I'd soon quiet the country: I'd shoot 'em like so many rats!"

"I dare say you would," observed the person he addressed, and who seemed rather to shrink from coming in contact with one who appeared to Edward half giant half savage; "but you wouldn't like a good paying tenant of your own to be shot, Mr. O'Driscoll."

"It shall certainly be investigated," repeated Ed-

ward; and his quiet, calm, determined tone had a peculiarly clear and impressive sound, following, as it did, the rolling thunder of the giant's brogue, and the sharp clamour of the eager speaking of the past minute. "I ask not concerning any man's faith——"

"Don't ye though?" interrupted the giant. "Bedad, my boy, you've a great deal to learn then."

"I ask not," repeated Edward, looking steadily at O'Driscoll, "concerning any man's faith, but I demand justice; and I will certainly have this (as it seems to me) murder investigated. If you, gentlemen, will assist me, I shall feel obliged; if you will not, I shall certainly go at once to Dublin, and compel an inquiry."

"The devil you will," exclaimed Mr. O'Driscoll, looking over his huge spectacles at Edward, whom (having entered only the previous moment) he had not been introduced to. Then, speaking loud enough for all to hear, "Who the deuce is he?" he was told, and his ruffled feathers were smoothed in a moment. He advanced towards the young Englishman with his gigantic arms outstretched, seized his unwilling hands within his own, and crushed them in his fervent grasp; slapped him on the back, declaring he was the very cut for a steeple chase, and then demanded how it was that he, who came "from the right sort, and had good wholesome Protestant blood in his veins, should make such a 'bother' about shooting a fellow in such times as the present, when it was needful and necessary to prove the power of the law?"

Edward would have shown that the power of the

law was in its justice, but his new acquaintance prevented him.

"Sure, my dear boy," he said, "if ye have a fancy for it, that's enough about it. I'd never gainsay any fancy of one of so fine a family as yours. We'll have the officer, and the dragoons, and all of them in at once, only—it's a quare humour you took in yer head, I must say. Englishmen are mighty quare in such little things. I thought it was some friend of Jack Townsend's who raised the *pullalew*, because the boy was one of his tenants. Faith, I'd be sincerely obligeed to any one who would shoot half-a-dozen of mine in the same way, I know that;"—and he laughed heartily and loudly at his own admission; and then, in as loud a voice, asked the Master of Macroom what they had best "file into" first; whether they'd have Abel up, or take further examinations as to the post-boy affair; or get whatever shine he'd got out of "Pether the Peeler."

"I beg your pardon," said Edward, "for interrupting you, but it struck me that 'Peter the Peeler,' was mentioned by one of the people at the cottage as being there at the time."

"Nothing more likely. We'll get the truth out of Peter."

"It will be the first time then, I believe," said the dean.

"Look here, Mr. Spencer, and mind what I'm telling you!" thundered O'Driscoll, "don't mind a word the parson tells you. Only I have such a respect for the Establishment, I'd never enter his church; he's not worth a farthing, he's no spunk in him; he's a *mode-*

*rate man*—think of that! Sure I once heard him call a priest his christian brother."

Now this did not appear at all monstrous or improper to Edward, though it was followed by a laugh, and a "No, no, no" from many a lip.

"That's what he gets by his English liberalism; think of Father O'Hay being the dean's 'christian brother!' Oh, Mr. Spencer," he continued, after another roaring laugh at his own words, "if your aunt had heard him say that, I give ye my honour it would have killed her; though the best of the joke is he did say something—poor dear woman!—almost as bad at her funeral, when he had us all praying for the skirling devils that poured over the hills and did us out of the first earth. It was a cowardly thing of Richards to fire and run that day! But don't mind the dean, Mr. Spencer—look—I give you my honour, this blessed minute, if he was turned out into the street of Macroom, the mob, that he's always temporizing with, would cut him into smithereens; and if it wasn't out of respect for his cloth, we'd cut him up in another way; Sir, he hasn't as strong 'a back' in the country as a field-mouse."

The dean smiled his usual placid smile at this charge, made half in jest, half in earnest, and the Master of Macroom Castle said he was certain Mr. Spencer had never heard of the memorable funeral, and had no idea what was meant by a "strong back."

Two or three gentlemen whose manners were courtly as courteous, men of polished address and admirable breeding, now suggested to the master of the house that, as Mr. Spencer was a stranger, and seemed very

anxious on the subject, it would be as well to inquire at once, into what he had that morning witnessed—for that they had much to get through before dinner.

"Ay, do it all before dinner," exclaimed O'Driscoll, rolling himself into a chair, which, substantial as it was, creaked and groaned beneath his weight, "or leave it till to-morrow; one can't be bothered with business after dinner, like a Dublin shop-boy."

In a few minutes the company were arranged in something like form. The master of the castle—as the square tower of the once extensive fortification is still termed—sitting on a magisterial-looking chair at the upper end of the table. The usual clerk was absent on business, but a dashing young fox-hunter, smelling of the stable, and habited in a "bang up" and an orange cravat, undertook his office, heading the purposed examinations with a pen and ink sketch of a gallows. Before he had time (as he would have said) "to furnish it," "Peter the Peeler," a well-known and bitterly-hated spy, was ushered into the room, the secretary *pro tem.* giving Edward a push in the side with his elbow, followed by the observation that "Now they'd have a regular run."

He was a slight but muscular man; his face, of the regular Cork fashion (so different from the long, narrow, sallow, black-eyed faces of Kerry), had high cheek bones, sunken eyes—bright, investigating, and hard as gray marbles; projecting brows, receding forehead, a head conveying an idea of remarkable endurance, firmly supported by a red coarse neck; the mouth was wide and projecting, and the nose short, thick, and

abruptly terminated. His long frieze coat was thrown back, and in the belt that girdled his waist beneath the "big coat," were a brace of pistols and a cutlass. The glance he cast round the room was sudden, and stealthy as a cat's. It was evident that he at once saw all who were present; the only person he looked at a second time was Edward Spencer.

"Well, Pether, honest boy, how are ye?" said Mr. O'Driscoll, taking off his spectacles and wiping them on the cuff of his coat, "how's every bit of ye that's in it? Here's a strange gentleman, Pether," and he winked at the company, "here's a strange gentleman, Pether, that will be glad of a little help from you in a small matter; he's an honourable man, Pether, and won't want you to *sin your soul*, in any very bad way; so you'll let him off *moderately*—eh, Pether?"

"Ah, Mr. O'Driscoll, Sir, you ever and always have your joke; ye never can let a poor boy like myself alone."

"Pether, ye never got your snug little place, nor that big coat, or boots instead of brogues, nor that fine bran new beaver, that his honour of Macroom needn't be ashamed to wear of a Sunday—by being let alone, Pether!"

"Ah, yer honour's mighty pleasant, I'll say that for you," replied the "peeler."

"Have ye seen any of the ghosts of the boys we sent out for the benefit of their education, Pether?"

"Sorra a one, yer honour."

"Now, 'pon your word," inquired the young gentle-

man who had been sketching the gallows, "did you never see a ghost?"

"Misther John," said Pether, "not to be making you an ill answer, I don't see what business it is of yours whether I did or not. I'm too busy with the living to think much of the dead."

"Bravo, Pether, spoken like a man," persisted Mr. O'Driscoll, who imagined he was doing Mr. Spencer a favour by drawing out the informer, whom, like some others of the party, he used and despised. "So all that little story of Mary Malloy, whose husband was hung by mistake, was an invention—eh, my Pether?"

The man's red complexion instantly sunk into a dusky yellow. He seized, with both his hands, the top rail of a high chair behind which he stood, opened his mouth and gasped at the air convulsively;—it was like the expiring breathing of a stranded shark, into whose vitals a harpoon had been deeply struck. He raised his hand to his throat, and after a struggle, though the words gurgled and faltered on his white lips, he was heard to say, "Don't, Sir, asy—asy wid me, for the love o' God. I thought, Sir—I *hoped* he was guilty; and, Sir, sure if he wasn't—if he wasn't, gintlemen—there's many a one sent out of the world innocent, as well as him. Many a one, as you know yerself, Mr. Driscoll, Sir; and if it was the last word I had to spake—"

"There—we'll speak no more about it," said the master of the castle.

"Best way!" observed Mr. O'Driscoll, putting on his spectacles, apparently without noticing the emotion

of the wretched man, "there's no use in crying after spilt milk, is there, my Pether?"

"It was blood, Sir—SPILT BLOOD—woman and childre' too! I beg yer honour's pardon," continued the man, addressing the master, "but would you order me a glass of whiskey; there's something gripping mee throat, and it's only the whiskey washes it down."

He eagerly drank off the liquid poison, that was speedily procured, and then bowing respectfully to Edward, inquired in a changed tone, "What he could have the pleasure to do for his honour?"

The master of the house having looked over the few notes that Edward had made in the morning, asked Peter, if he had been out with the military.

"I was."

"And where did you take them?"

"Not very far. We went out about two in the morning, for a rason I had, that one who knew about the post-boy was in a place near Kilcrea."

"And did you find him?"

"We did not."

"Any trace?"

"Sorra a trace, except a pair of big brogues in the house, and the marks of the bare feet that fitted them in the bog at the back of the pigsty."

"Did you follow the track?"

"As far as it would go. They said in the house they were all down with the feaver, and the soldiers, who fear the sickness more than powder or shot, wouldn't turn into it."

"And what then, Pether?" interrogated Mr. O'Dris-

coll, who kept swaying about until he impelled his chair close to the table, upon which he rested his elbows, "What then? you're not one to take the soldiers out for nothing."

"It discourages them, Sir, if one takes them out for no good," he answered, "and so we went hunting afther arrms."

"Did you find any?"

"Troth we did, in a barn, under the thrashing floor. We got a fowling-piece and two horse-pistols at Jem M'Swiney's, close to Inchira Hill—Crookstown they call it now—and from what I hear there was more of the same sort thrown into 'the Bride.' I wouldn't go bail but some of the arrms taken out of Mr. Townsend's house, had a dip in that purty strame, and are lying there still."

"Had you any disturbance with the people at M'Swiney's?"

"No; there war no men in it, at all, Sir, only the women and childre'; and they all swore they knew nothing about the arrms, or any thing else. They war all bad in the feaver too. One girl said some strangers laid the arrms there when the ould man drove his pigs to Cork—you never can get the truth out of them. The arrms are outside, your honour."

"Very good, Pether. Then what road did you come home?"

"What road? by Coolomer; where I had good rason to think I'd light upon another bird's nest."

"In whose little place?" demanded the gentleman who was annoyed at his tenants being molested.

"In Ignatius Doyle's, plase yer honour."

"I thought, Peter," said the gentleman, advancing, "I gave you fair warning before, not to meddle or make with any of my tenants?"

"You did so, your honour; but it wasn't only the thrifle of arrms—I had good rason to believe that Doyle was one of the first and foremost in the burning below Macroom, at Mr. Richards; and it's well known that some of the boys who was at that, have papers that, if we could only get hoult of, would let us into the rights of whose in, and whose out, through the whole counthry. It's well known to your honours that the head and strength of the Whiteboys isn't in the poor cabin keepers and mountain runners—not it indeed! Ignatius is a well-larned boy, and has a first-cousin housemaid at Spencer Court, and another travelling the world as child's maid with a lady; in troth, there's some brother, or sister, or cousin of Igg Doyle's in every Protestant house in the country. Igg is mighty well larned."

"*Was*, you mean, for he is dead," said the landlord, looking steadily at Peter.

"Musha! yer honour don't say so," answered Peter, with a well-feigned look of astonishment; "they war scrimigen widin the little place, himself and two of the solegers—and I had no mind to go in."

"I suppose," said the landlord of the unfortunate Ignatius, "*you* were afraid of the fever then."

"Musha, then God knows I was not. I went in with the sargeant first, and Igg was laying on the bed—a wet praskeen about his head—and I pointed him out,

and his wife began schreeming and roaring, and swore he was dying; and they lifted him on to the floor, and searched the house, and never a skreed or scrap of any thing, written or plain, could they find; and then he began aggravating the soldiers, and I come out—and so—that's all I know about it."

"And you heard no screams, no entreaties for mercy?" said Mr. Spencer, in a tone of inquiry.

"Oh, bedad, Sir, wherever there's a soldier I'm sure to hear the screams. They'd as soon see a fire enter the house as a soldier."

"You remember this," persisted the gentleman, "you entered my tenant's house, you find him ill in bed—"

"I beg your pardon, Sir—but it's my thinking he was wounded in some of the night skrimmiges," said the informer.

"No doubt; and died of his wound while you and the soldiers were there. I'm quite up to you, you see."

"Oh, Sir, I've nothing to do with it. I can show my employers part of the information I received. I did my duty in taking the military there; and am not accountable for any thing that tuck place betwixt them. I've seen half-a-dozen men shot of a morning, without such a bother about the blaguards."

The latter part of his explanation was given in a tone of testy insolence, that provoked a reproof from the presiding magistrate—a sharp and keen reproof, which had an admirable effect upon the party, who saw that "the master" was in earnest; and when this was the case, no one chose to trifle. Even Mr. O'Driscoll's

huge Momus-like countenance assumed a steady and thoughtful aspect; and the clerk *pro tem.* mended his pen and wrote vigorously. The landlord and Mr. Spencer (to whom much courtesy was shown) agreed that the soldiers should be examined, and Peter was ordered into a separate room while the examination proceeded. They failed, however, in making out a case against the men. They all declared that the man was dying when they entered; that they only used "necessary violence" towards those who endeavoured to prevent their searching the cabin, and removing Doyle from where they imagined, from his clinging to the spot, papers or arms were concealed; that a pistol went off in the struggle, but with no intent on their part to fire. And Mr. O'Driscoll, and several other warm supporters of the principle that

"They shall keep who have the power,"

seemed to think it a most wonderful and praiseworthy outstretching of the hands of Justice towards her sister Mercy, that the commanding officer was bound to be answerable for the appearance of his men, *if* any proceedings were instituted against them by the relatives of the late Ignatius Doyle.

Edward was marvellously perplexed and pained. He felt that "Irish justice" and "justice to the Irish" meant not one and the same thing. He had seldom, perhaps never, been in an assembly of finer specimens of his fellow-men; there was a frankness, a spirit, a boisterous joyousness, about them, that, under other circumstances, would have stirred his spirit, and warmed his very heart; but without, were a starving and disaffected

multitude—a multitude of creatures by nature as frank, as joyous, and as brilliant as those who (with half-a-dozen exceptions out of twenty or thirty) seemed to care nothing for their sufferings or crimes, beyond the effect such sufferings and such crimes might produce upon themselves. Edward was fond of weighing and comparing, and was more prone to pause and think, than to act. "If these," he thought, "are the gentlemen of the country, I do not know how I shall get on—at least with them all." And then he remembered they were seen under peculiar circumstances of excitement; he recalled with pleasure what he had heard "the master" say; and began to appreciate the "wild" high breeding even of "the clerk;" again, he thought for an instant how unfortunate that such men were nursed in prejudice, and fed with the poisoned food of party; and when his eyes met those of the good clergyman, in one look his spirit drank in so much of christian love and charity, that he recalled the moonlit deck, the soothing sound of the billows, and the words of the good man entreating him to patience and forbearance. It would seem that youth and age perfectly understood each other; there was between these two a sympathy so great, that without the disturbance of words they interpreted each other's thoughts—they believed each in the other's truth, uprightness, and honour! It was by an instinctive faith that this feeling pervaded their minds; and let no one disbelieve in this sympathy of honourable souls—this welling forth of the heart's confidence—this trusting—blessed to give, blessed to receive! Let no cold sceptic in human faith and human

goodness, turn suspiciously away from the open, honest trusting the true heart feels for heart as true—although experience may not have been yet brought to test it. There are some in this wide world whom it is a downright heresy to doubt; there are others, from whom all kindly instincts turn loathingly away. Cheered and calmed by the kind looks of his reverend friend, Edward was disturbed by the announcement, that it would now be well to take the depositions of Mr. Richards.

## CHAPTER XV.

### THE MIDDLEMAN A WITNESS.

Abel Richards was possessed of considerable dramatic talent. He dressed to admiration whatever he wished to appear; and though his strong and evil passions frequently disturbed the calm and stolid expression of his countenance, yet its Mawworm look, when he entered the well-filled room at Macroom Castle, was perfection itself. His hands were folded, his head was bent, his eyes were half closed: his was the martyr aspect of one who, during the past week, had submitted to the scourge and the cord, and sundry beatings of the breast, and resolved to carry his stripes into society, and descant upon them as people do upon good fortune.

And here again was another reading of a national character—the national character of a versatile people—so versatile, as to require being long known to be at all understood—more consistent to inconsistency, than to aught else; and yet more steadfast, more enduring to their great points of faith, than any nation upon earth.

Some of the gentlemen, too proud to recognise the

middleman save as a necessary whipper-up of acres and tenants, nodded to him encouragingly, and such salutations he returned most respectfully, for they were made by "the first men in the county." Others, believing that he was what he desired to be considered—the victim of a persecution arising from his change of faith—advanced kindly, but still with an air of superiority, and shook him by the hand. In return for these salutations he muttered a few sentences, of which Mr. Spencer could only hear the words, "brand from the burning"—"highly favoured"—"merciful providence"—"humble martyr"—"deep gratitude"—"christian fortitude"—"butcherly papists." Others, again—of whom Mr. O'Driscoll was the leader—threw at the man a sort of tallyhoing welcome, which resembled the salutation of a pack of young hounds to an old fox, from whom they expect "sport," and whose escape they are consequently determined to prevent. This greeting he accepted with a hideous attempt at an enduring smile; but met the eye of the dean in a far different manner as he extricated his hand from the pressure of Mr. O'Driscoll's, who had the usual county propensity for dislocating fingers with an hospitable shake. His hesitation of manner—not exactly knowing whether to advance or retreat—betrayed that he felt his equivocal position more deeply than might have been supposed.

"I am very glad, Mr. Richards, you were preserved," said the clergyman, advancing towards him, "it was a great mercy—one not to be forgotten."

"Never, Sir, never!" he replied, "never to be for-

gotten. Ah, Mr. Spencer, Sir, your lot is cast in troublous times; you remember my warning, Sir, in Cork, when I had the holy happiness of laying my little tributes before you. Ah, Sir! I did not then think how nearly I was being made a brand for the burning—but the hand, THE HAND was outstretched! If an accident, which I thought in the blindness of my carnal nature was injurious to my worldly interests, and disturbed my poor narrow plans, had not occurred, and detained me—and that too, privately, at Inchegeela, I should have been in my own home. I came upon it when it was consuming, and mercifully, Sir, found shelter beneath the roof of Spencer Court."

"Come tell us all, Aby—how was it?" inquired Mr. O'Driscoll, "did you pass through the scoundrels?"

"No, Sir, I give thanks, not through them, I skirted them; I heard the moans of the perishing animals; I heard the taunts, and the jibes, and the insults they addressed to me; I even looked in the faces of some who gazed only on the fire, and—whom—I can identify."

"Oh, to be sure, you can!" interrupted the ever jovial O'Driscoll. "I hope some of my devilish bad tenants were among them. Now, 'pon your honour, weren't some of my Skibbereen boys, who never pay a farthing, and whom I daren't eject, in the thick of it? Look! I'll give you as fine a mare as any in the county equal to sixteen stone—ten pound better than the gray seventeen hand ould stager that's burnt—if you'll put into the black list three names that I'll give you. And, Aby, it will be a national benefit—it will be a blessing

to the country to be rid of them; it will stand against all the lies—I mean all the truths you could these six months."

"Oh, Sir, may the Lord forgive you!" replied Richards, casting up his eyes, "but you are only in jest, Sir, nothing more; yet it's awful jesting—it's awful, Sir, uncommon awful, under the circumstances. Those I can identify I will identify, that's all; though sooner or later I shall be the sufferer—I know that. But I have been—"

"A brand plucked from the burning, isn't that it?" laughed O'Driscoll. "I'm sure you must have been a pile of brands, for I have heard you brand yourself after this fashion fifty times a year at least!"

"Pleasant, Sir, always pleasant! You have much to be thankful for in that charming flow of spirits. Mighty pleasant," muttered Mr. Richards.

"But here's Mr. Spencer, dying to know how it chanced that you ran to earth at Spencer Court."

"I should be glad, indeed, to hear it," said Edward; "but did not like to intrude my inquiries when I understood Mr. Richards had to make depositions."

"Faith, that's not bad—that just chimes in with the master—who looks pistols and bullets at me, whenever I disturb the gravity of an investigation. We manage in Ireland to mingle law and love, and jest and murder, abduction and reduction, whiskey and pistols, courtship and matrimony, wit and starvation, most lovingly together. There's a spice, a zest, a flow; a running fire of all things—in and out, round and about

us—a flashing and a splashing—that you never find anywhere else; everywhere we mingle all things."

"Not quite," said Edward, "there are some things, which in all other countries are mingled; yet here, I perceive, are as distinct as the waters of the arrowy Rhone and Geneva's Lake. You do not mingle your religions or your politics."

"No, no! We do not want to mingle them," was the reply; they were the only serious, earnest words Mr. O'Driscoll had spoken.

The single sentence uttered by Edward Spencer, produced a sensation throughout the room, of which he was perfectly unconscious; but the dean well knew that from those few true words, much scandal would arise, and much doubt be excited as to the real state of the young Englishman's opinions. There was, however, no time for speculation or thought upon any topic—partly from a desire to get the business over, and partly from a knowledge of the minuteness of the straws over which Irish society so frequently stumbles.

The master set to in good earnest with Mr. Richards, who commenced his narrative in a low tone of vulgar cant; but as he warmed to his subject, hinting occasionally at his "past persecutions," and his different suspicions and hatreds of various persons, he came out in his real character; dark, cunning, determined, cloaking his vengeful feelings beneath the guise of justice; stating the reasons why he thought such and such persons were deep in the disturbances; until, while his brows gathered into a storm-cloud, and his closed lips

—and hands clenched with the cruelest determination —proving the deadly nature of his feelings—he denounced Lawrence Macarthy as the great fire-brand—the arch conspirator—the chiefest amongst them all. He stated his firm belief that Lawrence was *the* one, the invisible, Captain Rock;—the unseen, unknown agent, principal mover—every thing, in fact. Nerved into strength of declamation by his bitterness towards the young man, whom he himself had nearly murdered, he continued to pour forth his violence, until, forgetful of his assumed character, he sealed all with an oath, so deep and dreadful, that some, albeit not over scrupulous in asseverations, shuddered, while the laughing colossus, extending his heavy arm across the table, shouted,

"Capital!—thank you for that, Aby;—there you were yourself, my fine fellow! Never turn the whites of your eyes again on me for my light oaths, which are as gossamer to this! Why, what a revengeful reprobate you are! The old leaven—the old leaven, that's it, isn't it? I say, you must turn monk; there is nothing but the round dozens and hard work at Gougane-barra, or Rome itself, to rub out such blackness! That *was* an oath! Swear it again, Aby, I'll give ye ten pounds if you'll only swear it again!"

But Richards did "turn the whites of his eyes," and clasp his hands, and mutter about the "weakness of the flesh,"—going so far as to hint that he wished to retire for the soothing comfort of private prayer. And then, recalled to his real nature by a question from Dean Graves, he answered that as the country

had been under martial law for some time, there had been no difficulty in searching the old owl's castle in which the young Macarthy lived, among the mountains, and that nothing had been found there, except indeed the sash and epaulette of a British officer, and a couple of handkerchiefs, not marked either with the Macarthy initials or Macarthy crest, which the old Madam Macarthy was so fond of putting on every thing.

An officer, who was present, expressed his firm belief that the Whiteboys, during the past year, had been subjected to a much more strict discipline—a well organised military tutelage—than had ever directed them before; and added that this conviction led him strongly to doubt Mr. Richards' statement, that Macarthy was their leader-in-chief—a young, impetuous man, utterly ignorant of the great principles of military movements, who at the very best, could only carry on in his own person a guerilla or brigand sort of warfare, shooting from behind a crag, or surprising, in an untenable position, a party weaker than his own. It was, he continued, known that an officer, connected with an old family, had altogether disappeared some months, perhaps more than a year ago; and circumstances led more than one person at the war-office to believe that his wild nature had found home and employment amongst the disturbers of Munster.

Still Abel maintained his point. Lawrence Macarthy was nowhere to be found; "he had 'good reasons,'" he said, "for knowing that he was right." In the crowd about his house, he only recognised the face of one man, Ignatius Doyle (this created a sensation, as he had

not heard the Peeler's evidence), the voices of several others (he gave their names); but he had proof, certain as life or death, that Lawrence Macarthy was the chief causer of the destruction that fell upon his property, and that papers of the utmost importance had been in his possession.

"He knew," he said,—"at least, he *had seen them* pass from Macarthy's hands into the hands of another person."

"Who was that person?"

He looked fixedly at the dean for a minute, and then glanced at Edward Spencer.

"It was a person—a woman—a girl—in fact a young lady; he did not know if it would be agreeable to Mr. Spencer to have it spoken of, but she was generally considered a relative or connexion of Mr. Spencer's; he *saw* them transferred from the hands of Lawrence Macarthy into those of Ellen Macdonnel." Upon this statement, both the dean and Mr. Spencer rose.

"It has so happened," said the young Englishman, "that I have never seen my kinswoman, Miss Macdonnel; nor did I till this moment consider what has suddenly occurred to me, that the Macarthy of whom you spoke is unfortunately her half-brother; but from all I have heard, from all I believe of this young lady, she is perfectly incapable of acting in concert with any one opposed to her faith or her allegiance. I shall see her within a few hours, and am assured I shall be able to prove to the Master of Macroom Castle and the present company, that Mr. Richards is labouring under an illusion."

"I am very certain, Sir, that you will not see the

young lady," said Richards, decidedly, "within a few hours; that is, if you expect to see her at Spencer Court —she was not there this morning."

"May I ask how you came to be so informed?" inquired Mr. Spencer.

"The house was searched for her and the papers," was the reply.

"And did you dare, had you the audacity to institute a search of my house, under the idea that my relative concealed illegal papers therein?" said Mr. Spencer, his cheeks flushing, his eyes sparkling, his slight graceful figure expanding with indignation.

Several of the gentlemen rose; O'Driscoll shouted a "Bravo!" that shook the ceiling, and "the Master" called "order:" it was faintly though, very faintly, for there was no one in the room who more sincerely appreciated the spirited bearing of the Englishman. Several of the young men clapped their hands, and then whispered each other in dismal tones, that it was no use—Richards hadn't the "pluck" to draw a trigger. It promised to be a jest to these youngsters, but it was earnest to Edward. "If," he added, "you imagine you can fasten this slander upon a lady, you are mistaken; I am the representative of her nearest kin; and as such, feel it my duty to protect her."

"I must confess," said the Master, "it seems to me strange that Mr. Richards should distinctly state that Lawrence Macarthy was the chief agent in the destruction of his house; that he, in point of fact, meditated his murder; and yet, that he *saw* him place papers of such importance in the hands of Miss Macdonnel."

"Ay, riddle us that. What were you doing, my Aby, when the young rebel gave his sister the papers?" inquired Mr. O'Driscoll.

"I—I," stammered Abel Richards, "I—I was looking on, and praying to the Lord!"

The dean cast upon him a look of withering indignation, it could hardly have been believed that so gentle and benevolent a face could have given expression to such deep scorn at the man's hypocrisy.

"Poaching on my friend Pether's ground—spying—? eh, my Aby? Was it through the architecture of a turf rick you looked, or out of a potato pit, or with yer eye stuck in a crevice? You had always a sort of second sight, and could see what no one else could, I'll say that for you."

"A truce to this," interrupted the Master. "Mr. Richards *must* inform us how he came to witness this extraordinary transfer."

Very unwillingly, and with sundry *détours* from the truth was the statement made. "How, escaping from the brightness of the flames that would have betrayed him, he forded the river and found himself in a state of extreme exhaustion and dismay beneath the shadow of Spencer Court; that, knowing the evil inclinations of all therein towards him, he dared not enter; that he crept to where the moon threw the shadows darkest, but discovered that every point except the one where he had crossed was guarded, as the Whiteboys had posted scouts to prevent escape at each corner of the building; he had seen two whispering within a yard of where he stood, and that had he not crouched into a recess caused

by a projecting buttress he would have been discovered; that, observing a light in Miss Ellen's window, inspired by a sudden hope, he entered and entreated her protection."

"And received it, I am sure," said the dean, "though you must confess that of all men living, you had the least reason to do so."

"She concealed me," he replied, drawing a long breath, "and I hardly know who came or who went, (though, craving Mr. Spencer's pardon, every inmate of his house, as I discovered that night, is a fire-brand)."

"Permit me, Sir, again to doubt you," said the excited Edward. "They are the same who served my uncle faithfully for a number of years. You will have the goodness to remember, gentlemen, that Miss Macdonnel gave this person the protection he desired, though, if I understand Dean Graves aright, he is personally offensive to her."

"She certainly stowed me into a cupboard," said the caitiff, "where had there not been a providential opening for breathing I must have been suffocated. I prayed fervently, and her fierce dog put me in bodily and continual terror of my life; my clothes were dripping wet, and I had no creature-comfort of any kind."

"Except protection, Sir, the protection of your life," observed "the Master."

The traitor looked embarrassed, but regaining his self-possession, continued: "Presently, Sir, the window shook as with a sudden thunderbolt, and Lawrence Macarthy covered with blood entered, he was moreover *disguised*, had taken more stimulant than was good for soul or body, and she told him so. She made every

effort to get him out of the room, for she did not wish me to hear his words."

Edward, who had resumed his seat, rose, and requesting the chairman's pardon, begged to observe that he did not think Mr. Richards had any right to allude to what Miss Macdonnel *thought*, which he could not possibly understand, that he was very certain she could never (supposing Mr. Richards' statement to be true) have believed that any human being would have been so base as to owe his life to her, and then inform as to what passed in the sanctuary wherein that life was saved.

Richards also rose, and bowing round the circle appealed to them, whether a sense of "public duty" should not compel a man to a task, which else would be beyond all endurance; adding, he would sooner have died than implicate a lady; and then he stammered and hesitated, receiving no returning smiles, until the "go on, Sir," of the chairman forced him back, when he briefly related what is already known to us. He made the case as violent and as bad against Lawrence Macarthy as he possibly could, for the evident purpose of exculpating himself as much as possible by showing a necessity for his treachery; he pictured his own individual agony, his "wrestling with himself," his burning desire when he saw the papers marked with the life-blood of so many whom he loved, to wrest them from the Whiteboy's hand; but then "the weakness of the flesh" restrained him. He even related with fiend-like joy Lawrence's determination to speak loud when his sister entreated him to speak low; and he told this without one remembrance of a grateful nature towards

her, who, rather than violate the laws of hospitality, or break a promise she had given, risked her own destruction, and the destruction of one dearer than herself. The deep unvaunted generosity of Ellen Macdonnel had been thrown away upon a soulless hypocrite; and to add to her exceeding merit, she knew that it would be so. He told also that Lawrence "fatigued with bloodshed—slept; that he felt as if the sword of Judith had been committed into his hands; he could have bound him then—but—"

"But what restrained you?" inquired the Master.

"The Lord's time was not accomplished," whined Abel Richards, "and his sister placed his rifle across her lap—and her eyes upon where I lay—and her dog watched with her."

"My poor, poor Ellen!" murmured the dean, "what she must have endured if only a tithe of this be true!"

"I give you my honour," said O'Driscoll, "it's mighty quare; let's get to the end, and then I'll tell you my mind, my Aby."

"The end cometh," quoth the man; "Lawrence awoke, and went his way in peace; and not long had he been gone, sauntering—as he always does—as if intent on nothing but innocent diversions after birds or rabbits, when I heard the roll of a distant drum, and sundry shots, and my heart awoke, and I could have shouted 'the sword of the Lord and of Gideon,' but I refrained, and slid me down from the window, and found the military; and the kindliness of my nature restrained my tongue, so that at first I said no word of Spencer Court."

"I beg your pardon," interrupted the officer who

had before spoken; "but I think, if I mistake not what I heard this morning, that you would immediately have returned there, but that knowing it was the residence of an English Protestant gentleman, it was some time before you could make the necessary affidavit to warrant a search."

"Ah! perhaps so," said the pliant Abel; "my poor head wanders—the delay was fatal—the young lady and the papers disappeared. I think, Sir," to Mr. O'Driscoll, "you were so kind as to say you would give me the advantage of your opinion."

"Ay, that I will," said the colossus, "and I only wish that my heart was round your neck this minute, for it's as heavy as a mill-stone."

An instant "buzz" went round the room. The extraordinary elocution of the uneducated but well-born "Munster giant," was generally followed by shouts of laughter. But there were times when no one dared laugh at what he said, however strange might be his words. The fire of his eyes—the iron-like clenching of his fists—his well-known violence—restrained the brave, thoughtless, and reckless fox-hunters of Cork and Kerry. After he had expressed this extraordinary wish, from which Abel shrank, he slowly unbuttoned the old-fashioned cuffs of his coat, and turned them back, so that his bony wrists and the cord-like veins of his hands, were fully exposed. He then seized the collar of his coat, and, as it were, shook himself into it. He was positively agitated, trembled, and then drawing himself up, he prepared to speak, amid silence rendered breathless by these strange preparations.

"There's none of you gentlemen here but know my principles. I'd carry fire and sword—battle—blood—murder, and sudden death through the country—for the sake of my principles. I'm Saxon to the backbone, barring my name; and yet I am as proud of my name as I am of my principles. I'm no great speaker, and would rather any day knock a man down than argue with him. But there are some things I must speak. I knew that girl's mother," he paused—he thrust his forefinger into the ample folds of his cravat, the muslin rent at once, and the swelling of his throat, now completely exposed, proved that some violent emotion was raging within him—"I knew Annie Cumming," and his voice sank while he added, "I never forgot her. I've checked my horse in many a day's coursing, when *she* was dead and gone, to listen to the wild singing of her child, or to see her bright smile as she'd canter along the mountain road, to my friend the dean's over there. I've looked in her face as she grew towards womanhood, until I dreamt her mother was before me. I've watched her charities, and blessed her for them, though she did them to Papists. Gentlemen, you who know my principles, will understand how I feel to have Annie Cumming's child set by such a wolf as *that*. Now easy, boys, and stand from about me, to give me breath."

"I am certain," said Edward Spencer, "that it is a fabrication from first to last."

"No—no!" exclaimed half-a-dozen, and one continued, unmindful of his blunder, "Lawrence Ma-

carthy is well known — rebel blood has ran in his veins *three hundred years!*"

"It's not *that*," resumed Mr. O'Driscoll; "I don't care if his head was over the court-house to night, before to-morrow, just for his father's sake; but haven't you the hearts of Irishmen in your bosoms, to feel what SHE did? Why, that young Irish maiden performed a deed of honour which you can't match in your college books. I see it all; every soul in that house would have sent HIM, crouching there, to blazes, if she had but raised her finger towards his hiding-hole. Yet she preferred endangering her own and her brother's life to a breach of hospitality, or a forfeiture of her word. Glory! is there no shout in yer throats for such a girl as that?"

The electric spark kindled, and in that very room a wild hurrah and a clapping of hands was raised for her—so loud as to be heard by the people outside the gate. It was a burst of national generosity and gallantry sweeping away all petty feeling for the moment; it was the generous impulse of generous nature. The Master of Macroom called "Order—order," while he wiped his eyes, and vehemently reproved the temporary clerk, who had shouted louder than any, and who, caught in the irreverent fact, sat down to plunge his pen in the ink with greater diligence than ever.

"Afther that," said O'Driscoll, quite comforted and calmed by an ebullition of feeling which might have caused the walls of a modern mansion to tremble as with an earthquake; "Afther that, I'll tell Aby Richards what I think of him."

"I think," he began, "I think," he said again, but his eyes sought the man in vain; Richards had taken advantage of the momentary tumult to slip out of the room, not caring to wait for the promised "opinion."

One shouted, "broke cover," another, "stole away;" but when the door was opened by those who resolved to hunt him, so decided a smell of roast meats and savoury dishes entered, that an universal feeling prevailed, that a good day's work had been accomplished, and they could determine what steps should be taken to bring to justice those who were really implicated, and also for the discovery of the papers—after dinner. The dean volunteered to find Ellen Macdonnel; and many expressed a conviction that they should be able to hit upon a means of enforcing subjection, and tranquillising the country before the next morning; while others—old, thinking men, shook their heads, and sighed.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### THE PREPARATIONS.

A DINNER of any kind, but an Irish dinner in particular, is at open war with thought; and as the claret and whiskey punch circulated freely, and each man was expected, if not obliged to fill his glass, there was little time for reflection. Edward greatly wished to arrive at Spencer Court, but found his "leaving" would have been considered a direct insult to the most hospitable house in Munster. Dean Graves told him, that his presence there might be useful; and when those who had doubted the young Englishman's "principles," saw him toss off a bumper to the "glorious, pious, and immortal memory of the great and good King William," they became convinced he was "one of them." Thus was he unconsciously pledged to the two opposing parties; at Blarney, he had drunk a toast he did not understand; and at Macroom, he was not aware that drinking the health of a cool-headed ruler, a great—if not a good—man, could be any thing beyond a tribute to a memory which excited his admiration without inducing his sympathy. The evening waned on; toasts were proposed and songs

were sung. One, which Mr. O'Driscoll gave in a full rich tenor, and which filled the room with "a pleasing melody," was called for twice; it commenced as follows:

"Oh, what is Dan Macarthy, or what is old Jim Nash?
Or all who ere in punch drinking by luck have cut a dash;
Compared to that choice hero, whose praise my rhymes perfume;
I mean the boast of Erin's Isle, Bould Barry of Macroom."

Barry's great excellence lay in drinking more whiskey punch than any of his friends; and the humour (dull enough), in directing his wife, when he retired to rest, to "mix him" a gallon jug of punch to moisten his lips —as people in modern times, call for a bottle of soda water. Edward had no taste for the sentiment: and seeing that the dean, and several who seemed the most steady of the company had withdrawn; that at last the Master himself, pleading urgent business, and promising a "quick return," had absented himself; and that those who remained were drawing more closely round the table, dismissing claret as "too slow," and calling for "*screeching*," hot water, and fresh tumblers—he also contrived to escape, and half opened the door of the room they had occupied in the morning: but seeing "the Master" and several strangers there in earnest conversation, he closed it; not however before he had caught sight of Abel Richards, more erect than usual, which he thought boded no good to the cause of either justice or mercy. New as he was to the country, his impulse was to request permission to enter; and he would have done so, had he not observed that the dean was one of those who was grouped around the mysterious circle. Twice he put his hand on the handle, but his national reserve forbade it; and at last

he inquired of a servant "if there was another sitting-room?"

The man looked somewhat offended. "To be sure there is, yer honour, plenty of sitting, and sleeping rooms too—only when we have *all the county here*, we make bould to put up a few beds, shake downs, or any little convanyinces that way, for the quality. Oh, bedad! it's in Macroom Castle, long life to his honour! that there is full and plenty of sitting-rooms, Sir—only these two, laid out for sitting in, just now, Sir, for the rasons I have explained to your honour! God bless you, Sir, though the castle is big enough for a troop of horse, we've every bed in the town taken for our company, borrowed or bought, yet a quarter of the gentlemen, the young pleasant ones, won't look for a bed at all—find one under the table, or out on the grass—and then a dip in the river, and they're up to any thing."

"You must be very tired," observed the young Englishman, moved by the memory of the grumblings and black looks of the servants in Berkshire, that succeeded a ball or a hunting breakfast."

"Oh, Lord, no, Sir," answered the broad, grinning Munster face. "Oh, Lord, no, Sir! the poor master do be tired sometimes—and more's the pity; but no such place in the county as this, Sir, for man or beast, or divarshin—full and plenty; and if we die in the service, lashings of pipes and tobacco at the wake, and his honour's self lading the head to the grave! No wonder we'd lay down our life for him—the Lord make his bed in heaven, I pray on my bended knees day and

night! and good reason I have, me and all belonging to me, living under his honour these two hundred years and more. And it's himself that's the *moral* of a good landlord. There isn't a gentleman in all Ireland that might not take pattern by him; and indeed, Sir, I'd be sorry you, or any strange gentleman like you, could be led to think that such landlords as Mr. Richards are the run of the country—they're as Master Matt, your honour's own schoolmaster, says, *the exception, not the rule.* And it's true for him—the best landlords, as a body may say, have the blood and bone of the country in them."

"I am glad to hear one of your class stand up so bravely for the landlords," said Edward; "very glad."

"There are good landlords all through Ireland," continued the man; "and I've travelled a great deal in my own country, as well as in England, with the Master, and known many fine, good gentlemen, who keep at home—God bless them for it!—and hear and see with their own ears and eyes; but, Sir, the way of it is, *that one bad man makes more noise in the world than twenty good ones;* and when once a cry begins, all take hold of it, and shout it on. Why the Master here is like a king among 'em. Never a bolt was ever drawn on the castle since I was born, or my father before me; and he has the hearts of every one of us in his hand, to throw or toss about as he likes. And why not? *Doesn't he deserve them?* Never distrained upon a poor man yet—never increased the hardship it was the will of God to visit on a widow, or a fatherless child—never asked whether a boy, like myself, went to mass or

church on a Sunday, as long as we did go, and kept the day quiet and holy; only if any suspicion was out against us, send for the priest, and inquire into it—and friendly he has always been with his reverence, a rale priest, whose vestments were made in the foreign countries where he got his learning. Oh, sure if there wasn't good landlords in it, Ireland couldn't have held out so long—the middlemen are the worst, that have no stake in the country, only make all for themselves—and those that never look on us can't love us."

"You are not in a very loveable state, just now," said Mr. Spencer, half smiling.

"God knows that's a true word for a stranger; but it never holds on long, Sir. We'll be asy enough soon—some of us too asy."

"Suppose," said Mr. Spencer, "that your Master was to distrain upon a man who would not pay."

"Every poor fellow pays the Master that can. His land is not let more than half up to its value, so that they make their own of it. Well, nothing hinders the paying of his honour's rents but the sickness, or if the tenant gets into any of the troubles that do be running through the country."

"Well, suppose he distrained under these circumstances?"

"But he would not, Sir. Sure I told your honour he was one of the good landlords; and did any one ever hear of a good landlord distraining upon a poor creature because he had no power to pay, and turning him on the cold stones of the world's high road for what was his misfortune?"

"Certainly not. But suppose a tenant would not pay, although he could."

"It's impossible, Sir," was the only reply Edward could elicit.

"Then I am to believe, that if arrears of rent are due, the Master—"

"Forgives the whole of it—that's just it, Sir, the easiest and the pleasantest way, and helps them on a bit," interrupted the servant. "But there's some not as well liked as the Master, and yet far superior to Mr. Richards, who's not his way inclined; and if they don't get their rent, why they talk very hard about it, and won't listen to reason."

"And what follows?"

"Why they talk again, and threaten hard entirely."

"And what then?"

"Oh, bedad, I don't know, Sir. They keep on at the threatening; and are mighty exact not to let the debt increase, and the like of that."

"Well?"

"Well, Sir, they threaten mighty hard entirely; but if they've any mind to remain in the country, just to be easy and comfortable, *they don't do any thing more than that.*"

"I understand," said Edward.

"Of course an honourable gentleman like yourself would understand it. And think how cruel it is to be drove from the only thing that keeps life and soul together—the bit of land! Ah, yer honour! if all gentlemen were like the Master, and the other good landlords, it's quiet enough the country would be;

only one or two bad ones upset the whole place—and a hard name sticks to many that don't deserve it. And God bless you too, Sir," he added—while finding his hat for Edward, who said he would take a stroll in the moonlight—"your servants say you're a noble master. It was mighty lucky yer getting rid of them English, Sir, in Cork: didn't understand the counthry, Sir. I ask yer honour's pardon," he continued, following Edward to the door, "but if ye turn that way, ye'll see a raal Irish jig danced: there's a piper in the barn divartin' the servants and followers with the music."

"Dancing!" exclaimed Edward, "and the country under martial law, and the town full of troops, and all disturbance."

"Oh, Sir," answered the man, as he brushed the hat with the cuff of his coat, "sure if we waited till the country was quiet, Sir, we'd forget the sound of the pipes and every step we had in the world long ago."

Macroom Castle is any thing but a handsome or picturesque castle. Patched and added to, at different periods, weather-slated in some places, and overgrown with ivy in others, it has a certain air of Irish negligence, Irish strength and Irish mismanagement about it, similar to that which, with few exceptions, is apparent to strangers in most of the still inhabited dwellings of its class. The moon shone full upon the square massive building, and the lights within gleaming and sparkling from amid the deep green shining ivy, or out of the blue slates, had a strange appearance to Edward Spencer; particularly when, directed by the rippling of the

Sullane to its banks overhung with noble trees, he looked back and viewed the castle through the boughs and foliage of the "Wilderness." At intervals the breeze bore the festive sound of the "union pipes," to which the thoughtless servants and retainers were dancing in one of the out-offices; while through the open windows of the banqueting-hall came the song—only half articulate—the wild shout at some favourite toast, and the wilder laughter. There was no sound from the town—except once, when the blast of a bugle caused several windows to be thrown open, and questions asked; Edward was certain they were questions from their tone, but he could hear no words.

The river was running calmly at his feet; catching occasionally the reflection of a distant light, and murmuring, as it passed, to the reeds and sedges that impeded its progress. The shadows of the moon are as capricious as a maiden's first smiles of love; now all light, anon all darkness—blackness, in truth, at times; then coming out more blandly and sweetly than ever, full of gracious and gentle loveliness—and even the more prized for their uncertainty. Lovers have written sonnets to her midnight majesty time out of mind, and before then, Edward Spencer had perpetrated verse, believing Mary the most poetical of all names—the *sound* of all dearest to his ear: no music was ever so sweet to him as the music of that gentle name. And yet the Mary of his affections was not so very gentle; the vigour and earnestness of *her* nature had more of the spirit of the eagle, than the wooing of the dove—and so he thought was more suited to his taste; but

what did that signify? Surely moonlight is to lovers a heart-aching light; or instead of this fancying and recalling, and almost hopelessly speculating on the future, he would have dwelt upon the stirring events of the few past hours. At last, his poor cousin took possession of his thoughts, and he blamed himself for having permitted her to remain so long in a state of uncertainty as to her after prospects. He felt that if she had been drawn into this dilemma it was in a great degree his fault. He should at once, as his uncle's representative, have seen that she was properly placed, away from all associations that would have harmed or degraded her. He longed to speak with the dean, and learn more about the child of Annie Cumming: of that "Annie Cumming" who had had the power of transforming the Orson into the faithful lover, whose rugged nature was so softened even by a memory long past—a memory of one so completely sacrificed, as hundreds have been, to party purposes — party animosities — party disputes. Then his mind wandered to the scenes of the day. Turn the matter over which way he would, he could not understand why of necessity the Protestant must hate the Catholic, and the Catholic the Protestant. Abroad, he had seen them live together with the utmost love and tenderness—in England, they were friends; but he had observed enough to prove to him the intense bitterness with which, singly and in masses, they regarded each other in Ireland. He hoped Ellen was a Protestant; he hoped her brother had not attained a religious as well as a political ascendency over her mind;—and he almost hoped that the tale of Abel Richards was a fabri-

cation. Still he did not like to give up the consciousness of Ellen's heroism; it was something for his mind to rest on—the real almost exceeded the ideal; it was a proud thing, misguided though she might be, to have such a kinswoman. He absolutely wondered if she were pretty; yet avoided a reply, for on this subject Edward Spencer was fastidious; his idea of womanly beauty being connected with exotics—refinements of all kinds, and, above all, small white hands and delicate feet—creatures of feeling, and sentiment, and poetry, rather than constituted as women too usually are—"to be, to do, and to suffer." No, Ellen could not be lovely, but she ought to have been cared for: it made him ashamed to think she had not been cared for. And where was she now? the dean had promised to find her; her absence looked like fear—fear of the power Abel Richards had acquired.

His train of thought or reverie, half waking and half dreaming, was disturbed by hearing something trail through the waters, a little below the bank on which he reclined. At first he thought it might be a swan he had aroused, but he remembered how noiselessly the bird floats. Some wild animal—a badger, or otter next occurred to him, and he walked slowly towards the noise, only, however, to see a man stooping over something that was dripping from the stream. Edward spoke, and the stranger, laying down what he was examining, advanced towards him.

"I have been waiting, Sir, about the place these two hours for Dean Graves, with a bit of a message from one he knows," said the mild voice of Master Matt,

the treasure-seeker. "Can you tell me if his reverence is in the place still?"

Edward at once recognised him, and the poor fellow was almost wild with joy.

"I've got it, your honour—I've got it now. My head was full of the one thing. I trod on a four-leaved shamrock this morning—here it is—as I was on my way here, and knew I'd be sure to find a treasure; and like a blinded mole, I thought but of the treasures hidden beneath stones and under waters—not of a living jewel—and I've been raking the river since the sun went down, thinking of the dean; and at last I got up something so heavy, and it was but an old hat, with an eel in it. I hate eels. Saint Patrick turned the serpents into eels, they say. It's a Popish superstition, but there's truth in it—

'Eels of a morning,
Are a dead man's warning.'

But the shamrock brought me to you—God bless you!"

He spoke in his usual tone, which seemed but the echo of a voice, so low and chime-like were its intonations; and his face was more like a shadow than a substance, beneath the tree—it was so white and spectral.

Edward offered to find the dean, concluding that Master Matt brought some tidings from Ellen, and commenced questioning the schoolmaster closely, but it was useless—his perceptions seemed quickened by her name. "There had been," he said "sad doings at Spencer Court—soldiers and disturbance. If the young master had been there it could not have happened; but

no one minded an old man like him, or Mrs. Myler, or the servants. To sack and rack a Protestant house, as if it had sheltered rebels! No wonder his hair was white! and poor Mrs. Myler in fits, one fit after another, declaring she'd go back to the north. How could she live there—and Miss Ellen to go away—Oh, times were terrible!"

"But where was Miss Ellen gone?"

"Mrs. Myler could not tell."

"Could he?"

The schoolmaster paused, then said: "Do not ask me—I *cannot* tell you—you might not be her friend, for you have never seen her—God bless her!"

Edward turned towards the castle closely followed by Master Matt. They met the dean; he was coming to seek Edward Spencer; the young man left the schoolmaster and the clergyman together, and returned to watch the moonbeams playing on the waters of the Sullane, and to muse on the past and speculate upon the future.

The lights were disappearing one by one in the castle, and the noise if not as continuous was more violent at intervals—expiring, it might be in convulsions. Presently the schoolmaster, followed by the dean, passed him, and he could not avoid gathering from their conversation that the treasure-seeker had lost a letter entrusted to his care; his anguish at this seemed beyond all description; he moaned and wept helplessly, while the dean was evidently too distressed to console him. "Could you not conquer your mad propensity," he said, "until your mission was ended? Could you

not refrain and keep your thoughts fixed on the duty you had undertaken?"

"They will wander," was the reply, as he clasped his hands on his forehead. "I tell them to keep quiet, and at home, but they will leave me. I pinned it in the bosom of my coat with a silver bodkin, a rare curiosity, and buttoned it tight and kept it close ALL the way here, but in stretching the rake I burst the coat, and forgot my darling's letter which she charged me to give into no hand but yours, and that privily and without words."

If a letter had fallen upon the tide it was of course swept onward by the stream and gone irrevocably; but in reply to the dean's entreaties to be told where Ellen was, and how she was situated, the master would only say: "She told it to yer reverence all in the letter, and said I was to speak no word."

It was in vain the dean entreated him to judge for himself.

"Your reverence," he said, "knows that I have no judgment, that it has pleased the Almighty to take it away; that I comprehend feebly like a child, and understand only as a child—I cannot judge. She told me, 'Speak no word about me—but give this—and bring an answer as you know how.' I will speak no word about the child; it may bring her evil; the shamrock was not for good."

Dean Graves knew that all argument was useless, for Matthew spoke the truth—he had no reasoning powers left; tears poured down his forlorn face, and he sobbed bitterly. At last the dean said:

"Go whence you came, or where you know, and tell the truth, tell her also, she has friends."

The schoolmaster's face brightened. "I know *that*," he said, and suddenly outstretching his arms upwards, he sank on his knees, and in a tone of deep pathos said, "GOD and his angels are her friends!"

Edward heard and saw this for he had joined them, and it stung as a fresh reproach into his heart:—truly she had had no others.

"Tell her, my dear Matthew," said the clergyman, while he pressed the chilled hands of the schoolmaster within his own, "not to fear, but to come to me to the Glebe as soon as she can."

"Yes," he said "that I will;" and eager as a child after a new employment, forgetting, or at least losing the bitterness of his past regret, he girded himself for the journey and left the domain of Macroom Castle—how, Edward did not understand; the dean seemed sadly troubled with apprehension that Ellen's letter might contain something which in the excited state of the country he should not like to fall into the hands of any party, but more particularly their own—and they talked the matter over until a servant told the clergyman that "the Master" wanted to speak a few words to him, in his own room.

Edward was again alone; sometimes three or four of the company came to the door, and stood and talked and laughed, but the revel and the riot, the hot debate and the wild song, had more fascination for them than the holy light of the waning moon; the night in truth was past, and the damp and shroud-like air clung coldly

around him; the river was more distinctly seen and a mist hung above—a gray thin mist—and Edward turned over the large water-lily leaves, and looked into the stream hoping to find that which had been so carelessly lost. The blackbird, whose shrill *reveillé* sounds from his golden throat before the sun arises, or the other wood-birds shake the globules of dew from their feathers —the "royal blackbird" was stirring among the boughs, thinking of waking, and watching with half open eye the coming light—it will not be long before he meets and greets it so as to woo it to greater speed!

There was an increase of existence as the morning advanced—a murmuring of young life—a whispering amid the insect world—a humming, mysterious voice from beneath broad leaves, and out of deep-mouthed flowers. If the blackbird led the wood chorus, there were many birds to follow; the thrush burst into his eloquent music, and the gray wood-pigeons cooed—not loudly, as at mid-day—but lowly mutterings of love to their fledged, but attending, broods. Still the air was chill; and Edward, really fatigued, resolved to inquire for his room, or bed, or whatever sleeping provision had been made for him.

He was returning to the castle, when he started at hearing his name called from out of one of those huge masses of Portugal laurel, with which Irish gentlemen's domains abound. He had not time to inquire who this was, or what the new mystery might be, when, after a preliminary "Whisht," which he had learned meant "silence," he heard: "Mr. Spencer, yer honour—whisht—will yer honour whisht!—stop, and good luck

to ye. Seem to be singing a song, minding nothing. They seen me in the kitchen; but they didn't know I had a little private business wid you. Sir, I'm Darby, that provided your honour with a post-boy of the right sort—a devil for driving, and a rock of sense. Just divart yerself with a bit of a tune, or any thing that way, till ye get below the great tree that bends so over the path that you can't get past, but are forced to go round it. Do, Sir—and God bless you—and be quick."

Edward smiled as he obeyed the command. In a few minutes he had gone round the bough that, as he had been told, he could not pass, and found himself in a miniature jungle of brush-wood, from which Darby emerged.

"My heart's light to see yer honour—and God bless you; but my heart's heavy for all that. My poor cousin Sir, Ignatius Doyle, you know—and you so good as to stop, and give them money—God reward you, and prepare a bed for you in heaven." The poor fellow turned aside, and sobbed heavily.

"Was it your cousin who was killed in some way, that does not clearly appear?"

"Faith, Sir, it was," answered the man. "I knew if any one could find the truth, it would be yer honour; and some other time I'll insense you into the rights of it. It's the way we're all murdered—but it's not bearable for me to be taking up yer attintion. Heaven above knows he was as innocent as a new-born babby of any harm to any one. If they massacray all that have a mind to stand up for themselves, they'll massacray the whole country. But our time will come yet.

The cause of my troubling yer honour is—that I have a bit of a letter from one you know, and one all the world blesses; and I want yer honour to cast yer eye over it just at once."

Edward thought it was more than probable the letter was of the same nature as the last brought to him by this volunteer post-man, and said, crushing it within his hand, "Very well, Darby, I'll read it when I can see—it is impossible to read any thing by this gray light."

"I'll settle that in a minute," was the ready rejoinder. "There's always a live coal in my pipe, and a whisp, or a dry stalk of hemlock, is bright by night—but I won't have the hemlock," he continued, tossing one of its over-grown and sapless stems into the water, "the dead pine is ready to blaze at a spark—and hemlock has an ugly name to read a lady's letter by."

No sooner said than done. "The live coal" was blown into a flame, and a bough of a pine, which had been smitten by lightning or decay, and hung from the tree, broken and kindled within the same moment. The effect was such as a painter might envy to see—the deep and rapidly-rolling river, the gray mist, half shrouding a landscape where, through the dimness, the trees stood out in quaint unearthly forms; the wild anxious look of poor Darby, bending forward with the flaring torch; while Edward, turned more than half away, saying,

"I am worn and weary, and will look at it after I have had some sleep."

"And is that the message I am to take back, yer

honour, afther wearing every rag of skin off my feet, and breaking my heart, to be in time; and not stopping at my own mother's sister's son's wake to draw a pipe, or take more than one glass of whiskey with them that's so near and dear to my heart's blood? Is that the message yer honour gives me to take back to her ladyship?"

"Whose ladyship?" inquired Edward.

"Lady Mary O'Brien her own self," was the reply.

"And why did you not tell me that before?" he inquired impatiently, unfolding the crumpled paper, and trembling with impatience.

"Yer honour never axed me, and more betoken when I gave it you, you scrunched it, as if the taste of her fingers had never been on it. Sure it wasn't in nature to suppose here I'd be, and my own flesh and blood and bones murdered beyant, unless I had strong rason. Well, glory be to God! one wants grate faith intirely to sign the holy sign of the cross on one's bossom, and say 'God's will be done,' afther all one has gone through this blessed day."

Darby talked on, half articulating, half muttering, but Mr. Spencer heeded him not. His attention was rivetted on the note; and yet its words were but few—it said:

"I am more than half distracted. After you left this yesterday, I received intelligence which makes the movements of the military now at Macroom a matter of vital importance to one very, very dear to me.

"I am certain you will be stopped on your way to

Spencer Court at Macroom Castle; they will be but too glad to have you amongst them—at least I cling to the hope that such is the case. If the dean should be one, so much the better; try and interest him in preventing any portion of the troops from searching Glen Flesk. I do entreat this *on my knees*, and if you can direct, or aid in directing, them anywhere else, I will never forget it. I would not have my father know my anguish for worlds.

"In the deepest anxiety, yours."

A little below was added in a still more tremulous hand—

"I hardly dare confide in the dean. Oh, that I had but hope!—I am sure you will forgive me. Do you know where Ellen Macdonnel is?"

Edward was overwhelmed with contending feelings—pangs of the bitterest jealousy shot through his heart. Could it be possible that Lady Mary had so deep an interest in any one of those misguided men who were obliged to seek shelter in the mountain fastnesses of the country? But to do him justice he was stirred by a far higher and better feeling. His nature was as chivalrous as sensitive, and he felt proud at having been so trusted by one he dearly loved. He thrust the letter into his bosom and strode hastily towards the castle without remembering his torch-bearer.

"Yer honour, what will I tell her honour?" inquired Darby, following.

"That her bidding shall be done," was the emphatic reply; "but I will write."

Darby still followed him. Mr. Spencer turned round and tossed him a guinea.

"God bless you, Sir," he said, "but it wasn't for that I followed you; only, as I am going raythcr a dangerous road before I'll get back to Cork, and if a line of writin' was found on me, it mightn't be pleasant for those who wrote, or those who ought to read. Can you give me a token—an eagle's feather for strength, or a hawk's for danger, or a curlew's for flight; but yer honour's in all sacrets, and knows all signs a dale better than the poor car boy. Why not? Have ye any of the miletary pass words?"

Suddenly the not very distant beat of the drum, a sharp and quick *reveillé*, startled both Mr. Spencer and Darby.

"Bad luck to yer noisy nothing of a body and your dirty skin! You're all noise and no tune," muttered Darby, skulking, at the same time, into a thicket of evergreens; for several people, among whom the accoutrements of one or two soldiers glittered brightly, were passing and repassing in front of the hall door.

"Are you on the move?" inquired Edward of a corporal who stood at the entrance.

"Yes, Sir."

"Where to?" he said.

"Don't at all know, Sir."

"Is your commanding officer here?"

"Yes, Sir."

The hall was nearly full; and some of the hard drinkers of the night—men whom Edward had not expected to see on their feet for at least a week—were in

full possession of their vigour and spirits. He mingled with them, and saw the Master of the Castle, with undimmed eyes, and renewed energy, talking with his usual animation to an officer and one or two other gentlemen. The words "Glen Flesk" struck upon his ear—upon his heart—and he could not forbear inquiring what they meant.

"Some of our friends are on the road to that glen of the outlaw," was the answer; "there will be warm work there before noon, I think. We shall unearth more than one fox, and shoot more than one traitor."

## CHAPTER XVII.

### THE TEMPTATION.

THE information communicated to Lawrence Macarthy by his sister, after the lapse of some hours from the time of his leaving Spencer Court, was of such a nature that he did not feel safe in the neighbourhood of his own dwelling. Month after month, he had been growing wild and reckless; (having nothing to lose except a life of which youth is so much more careless than age); and if there chanced any outbreak—such as that organized and hoped for by the friend he had committed to Murtogh's care—he had all hope of gain. Still such was his respect for the honours of hospitality, that when his first burst of astonishment and dismay, at being so completely in the power of Richards, had subsided, he kissed the pale cheek over which tears were streaming, with more tenderness and brotherly affection than he had ever evinced towards her before.

"Villain as he is," exclaimed the youth, "I would not have had him given an easy prey into my hands by a sister's treachery. It was a great opportunity, Ellen,

to revenge the shot, the wrongs to yourself, the continuance of bitter injuries, and still more galling insults he has heaped upon me, the ruin and misery he has wrought to hundreds. Whenever I have resolved to become as you would wish me, that man has invariably crossed my path—like a fiend, to tempt me to fresh violence, fresh hatred of the race he springs from." And then he paused, with darkened brow and clenched hands, until, as if strengthened and brightened by a new idea, he looked into his sister's face with a changed countenance, and sat down by her side on a rock that effectually concealed the entrance to one of the strongest holds of the wild and lawless bands of the South.

"After all," he said, "after all, Ellen, since you have managed to get the papers, so invaluable, clear of Spencer Court and in safety, I do not see that there is much harm done. The proof against me at present rests solely on Abel Richards' word,—*you* have but to manage skilfully, admit having sheltered him, and deny altogether having seen me, and all will be right. Dean Graves knows you so well that he will never doubt your word, and his moral influence is paramount with others; the hypocritical oaths of Richards will not weigh against your single word, Ellen; and the story is so improbable, so much more like one of the ballads or romances Master Matt used to tell us, that no one will give credit to the tale. No one in the country would incline towards the ruffian at all, except just now, when love of destruction has taken more than usual hold on our rulers. I really think the sooner you get back to Spencer Court the better: you'll be looked

after, and that quickly. I shall not keep out of the way; why should I? I think I see Abel Richards' accursed face when you deny his oath. You have only to be firm, Ellen—but I do not fear you."

But when the brother looked into the sister's face he did fear; her tears had ceased; her cheeks had flushed; indignation was struggling with astonishment at the supposition that she would deliberately state a falsehood. "How strange it is," she said, "that you can think I did right in affording shelter, when it was asked, to our greatest enemy, and yet cannot feel that I should most shamefully sin were I capable of uttering so entire a falsehood." It was grievous to see how the spirit of cunning and dissimulation had sapped away and corrupted truth in a nature brave, but mismanaged from the cradle: how he could value, according to his feeling, the high honour, and yet see no wrong in the mean lie! "God knows," persisted Ellen, "how earnestly and truly grateful I am, that your hands are unstained by blood: how I pray that the time may not be far distant when, withdrawn from this lawless life, you will seek your own honour and your country's good by worthier means."

"Silence!" exclaimed Lawrence, in one of those abrupt fits of passion he had latterly lost all power to control; "the scene of the past night is as a wild dream. I was mad—insane—intoxicated, from first to last, or, with all my hatred of Richards, I would not have rushed as I did at such uncertain and brutal revenge; but my great peril now is *from you*. I dare him to any proof without your evidence. He may say

what he pleases, but if you contradict him, I am safe: and not I only, but the friend of our cause, who has given up every thing that man holds dear for the sake of our trampled country—for the sake of a love which your cold northern nature has hitherto denied."

"You know," interrupted Ellen, "that I told you the papers are safe. If so, what has he to do with the matter?"

"True!" he said, "it concerns me only—at least for the present; though you well know he is the hinge upon which events must turn. You know that we—he and I—are so linked together in all things for life or death, that if the outbreak tarries, we must triumph. The discontent of the people is at its height; if its purpose can be directed, I repeat, we triumph. Ellen, on my life it was not I who first proposed this burning, though revenge on Abel Richards was too sweet to be withstood. The words I spoke were, I repeat it, madness. *You* would not convict me on their evidence—*you would not.*"

"I would not—I think I would not," she replied; "but you spoke them. Oh, what a fearful strait am I reduced to! Had I uttered but a word, no power could have saved that bad, bad man; he would have been hurried, with his weight of sins upon his head, into the Almighty's presence. And you, Lawrence, fierce, mad as you were—and my promise given to shelter him—it is almost impossible he can forget that I saved his life."

"When *you* forget your kindred to your brother, to the only living thing that claims you, is it matter for

wonder that he may forget," he replied, passionately; and then with bitter irony continued: "Irish indeed—you are not Irish. The Scotch blood of your mother, your Saxon breeding and refinement, have driven all feeling far, far from you! Well, go back to your luxuries, and denounce the last of the Macarthys—your own brother—so that, at the next sunrise, a price will be set upon his head. Don't cling to me, idiot!" he added, forcing her from him as she twined her arms round him: "You know where the papers are; so sell us all at a good price. Louis deserves this for his love, as much as I do for my kindred."

"Lawrence," said Ellen, roused by this outrage from her tears and weakness, "I will *not* go back to Spencer Court. I will conceal myself—anywhere; I will obtain means to leave the country; I will call upon the Almighty in mercy to take my life, sooner than it shall be spared to injure you; but *I will not* lay falsehood on my soul."

"And what signifies your remaining away," answered her brother scornfully; "of what use is it? Richards may say what he likes—*you* are not there to contradict *him*. His word will be taken; while your breath, your simple statement—fiercely panting as they are for sacrifice on sacrifice that needs so little form—your girlish word would be believed, and save me! The dean, who boasts of nursing you in the truth, would vouch for that."

"He knows me better than you do," was Ellen's answer; and then she spoke no more, but listened with a woman's true and loving patience to all he said—

fierce, bitter, violent, sarcastic—all by turns. She called to mind his peril; she remembered the peril of the wild, uncertain, unorganised cause to which he was pledged; she remembered also the danger of one whom she first knew when quite a childish girl, whose nature was "half error, half romance;" and so she listened to words and taunts, that at any other time, under any other circumstances, she would have repulsed and buffeted, as an eagle beats down the snow that drifts across his airy pathway. Lawrence was richly endowed with the national gift of eloquence; words flowed with ease and power from his lips, although untutored in courtly language; and, combined with his wild and unrestrained habits, were a considerable degree of *cunning* (we can give it no more elevated name), and a carelessness, reckless and unprincipled, as to the means by which a desired end was to be obtained.

Ellen had written to Dean Graves by the hand of her old schoolmaster, revealing no secret that was not strictly her own; and yet the probable result of the letter, coupled with her brother's violence, confused her more and more. She dreaded to tell him what she had written; and while endeavouring to collect her thoughts, and subdue the tumult that was beating in her brain, Murtogh, Lawrence's foster-brother, burst in upon them full of news as to the movements of the soldiers, and anxious for the safety of the only living creature his rude rough heart clung to in the world. It is notorious that, though many thousands of the Whiteboys knew the assembling stations, the pass-words, the *vital secrets* of illegal associations—formed by desperation born of

misery, rather than suggested by any political object—and were perpetually tempted by the offer of rich rewards to betray their comrades; yet they remain secrets unto this day. The evils resulting from this fidelity are to be deplored; but the fidelity is, in itself, so extraordinary a proof of strength and firmness, that it commands instinctive respect. Such steadfastness is not the growth of a light-minded people—of a nation of triflers.

Lawrence and Murtogh conversed apart in low and earnest tones: the latter ever and anon eyeing Ellen as if suspiciously, while her brother evidently regarded her with changed feelings. Or was this the result of her own fevered and disturbed imagination? Did the river foam and sparkle?—did one mountaineer after another rush from amid the adjacent underwood and down the hills, and gather round her brother, the last man still wilder in appearance than the first. Were their voices hushed and low, suppressed by a sense of danger, as if their words — as if the very air they breathed were fettered? Sometimes they whispered in their native language, under-tones of defiance mingled with emphatic descriptions of a danger, sudden and violent, and hard of escape. And did Lawrence, then, remembering that his friend, in whom they all trusted, was in peril more imminent than his own, command Murtogh to seek and save him, even to the spilling of his own blood; while the devoted foster-brother only felt how hard it was to be separated from the one thing his nature clung to, though he flew to do his bidding?

Was it, poor Ellen! was it a distempered imagina-

tion whispering that the strong arm of the law was outstretched to AVENGE the wild doings of Limerick, Clare, and Tipperary—the midnight gatherings of Kilkenny—the burnings and secret outrages of Waterford and Cork—was it outstretched to avenge all these, strengthened by a soldiery eager with their aid? She pressed her hands over her eyeballs, yet still stars floated before them; stars and streaks of fire, and fountains of red—red blood; and a cry that made her heart-strings shiver crept through her ears, filling them at last with the roll of drums and shrill brayings of trumpets, and then the cry again; and the banshee of the Macarthies waved her arms, and walked over the waters that rolled beneath her feet. Then the hard voice of her brother spoke of her insultingly, and coupled her name with treachery; and she would have spoken if she could, but her voice was gone; she had no power to utter a sound or to move hand or foot. And then she was uplifted by some invisible power, and she felt as if all things connected with this world were over; and from a burning heat she became deadly cold—the coldness that ices the blood, stagnates it as it flows, and then trickles and tingles through the half lifeless frame. There might, or there might not, have been *seeming* unconsciousness, but she felt conscious—conscious of the presence of what she at any other time would have considered an *unreal* existence—the presence of the countless multitudes who, bodiless, shadowless, are still floating in our atmosphere, present at all times—it may be to see and understand, and feel

for us; they regarded her with eyes of sympathy and tenderness; and yet she knew them not; she sought in vain for any she had known, but there were none; one came so very close to her, and folded its almost transparent wings above her head, and looked down upon her, with such soft clear eyes, and such a sympathising expression—could it have been her mother? The dream, or vision, or fancy, be it what it may, was kind and soothing; the *ideal* was so different from the *real*, the untrue from the true, that again the current of her blood flowed on, and the extreme heat and bitter cold, were alike gone, and her spirit self-returned to its present home.

She heard the mutterings of hard voices in Irish, mingling laughter and curses together, telling of projects frustrated and plans successful; and then, close to her side, the low "hushowing" of a well-known lullaby which mothers and nurses sing to their children:

"Avourneen sleep, for good angels are near;
Avourneen sleep, there's nothing to fear.
The cross on thy brow, and the cross on thy breast,
Will hushoo my darling to peace and to rest.
Sleep! while the stars are bright!
Sleep! 'tis a summer's night!
Avourneen sleep! there's nothing to fear;
Avourneen sleep! for good angels are near!"

Biddy Doyle was by her side, but where she was she knew not. She lay upon a bed of clean straw, and her head rested on Biddy's lap, who rejoiced "at her coming to herself again," and would not suffer her to speak, but continued talking, telling her all the time

that she must be kept as still and quiet as death itself, yet spoke of every thing most likely to arouse her attention.

But it did not escape Ellen's perception (which seemed to have suddenly and at once returned) that there were strangers in the room, or enclosure, and that arms, a gun and other weapons, leaned against the walls. Moreover, she felt assured that she was no longer at liberty to go and come—that she was, in fact, a prisoner.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### THE SHELTER OF THE GLEN.

THE morning that followed the night which had been so full of interest and mystery to Edward Spencer, was at first still and calm, but after sunrise the atmosphere became close and misty; the quiet, calm, suffocating "feel" that whispers of a coming thunderstorm, rendered all nature languid and seemed to overload the moments as they crept heavily along. It would be impossible to imagine any thing more intensely still;—the valleys were so silent, that the murmurings of the little silver rivers, more than half dried by the intense heats of the preceding days, could be heard on the heights above Glen Flesk; the cattle in the lowlands clustered together wherever they found a tree to shelter them; and the sheep, still more timid, huddled beneath the shadows of the cliffs and huge gray stones; the soaring eagle returned to his station, as if fearing that the hurricane which gathered, cloud upon cloud, would, when it came in its might and power, be too much even for his daring pinions to bear up against

—still he did not shrink from the approaching storm like the birds and coneys that were his food, or even like the tame herds of the valley, but stood firmly, turning his head occasionally round, on one of the boldest pinnacles of Crohane, the chief of the wild and sterile hills, that —composed of broken and rugged rocks, patches of heather moor and moss, all varying in their elevations—stretch away on the west side, from north to south of the glen.

It is necessary that we should become intimately acquainted with this picturesque neighbourhood, and also with the more wild and sterile pass of Kaim-an-eagh. Glen Flesk is a gem of glens—a thing of wildness and beauty which every traveller ought to visit—not only because of its seclusion and variety of rock, river, and wood, but because of the romance and adventure, the struggle and the bravery of those who, from time to time, have made it their hiding-place.

The Annemore, forms the western highland of this lovely glen; it is not so lofty as its stately neighbour the Crohane, yet it deserves its name nevertheless—Annemore signifying the mountain of difficult passages; but its sides are equally precipitous, showing continued ranges of dark rocks, rising in terraces, one above the other, interspersed with heath and patches of coarse and most scanty pasturage. Sometimes the little Kerry cows mount to these spots, and excite the astonishment of the few passing strangers, as to how they got there, or how they can possibly get down—wild mountain creatures, as adventurous as goats and as sure-footed. The flats of this valley, along the low grounds and beside

the river, are rich in pastures and tillage; and sometimes, stretching up a fissure, are found patches of cultivation promising a due reward for the care bestowed by the cottiers who inhabit the lowlands.

At the period of which we write, the dwellings were not as numerous or as well cared for as they are now; but at all times they were picturesque from their situation, and the number of beautiful trees, that without the aid of landscape-gardening grew in the most fitting places—in fact they could not grow in that charming glen without adding considerably to the beauty of surrounding objects. The valley was also interesting as being inhabited by the almost unmixed and primitive race of Celts—strong in their attachment to their native glen, ready for a "spree" or a popular commotion, hating the Saxon as much as misguiding demagogues could desire to see him hated, ripe for a foray, and enjoying the "fun" of a pattern-fight with the zest and *goût* of practised "boys," on all occasions that were fitting: and what occasion was not "fitting," if a row could be produced between friends or foes?

Those who dwell continually within sight of God's magnificence, who see His mountains, the resting-places of His clouds, who hear His echoes shouting to each other from the caves and crags, who watch torrent sporting with torrent until they mingle in the foaming river instinct with a mysterious life—who feel the unfettered wind playing round their heads, and with unwinking eyes watch the fiery arrows of the leaping lightning;—those who wake and sleep amid the terrors and wonders of creation are not so willing as those who

breathe the calmer breath of lowland plain and enclosed valley, or the still more slavish air of pent-up cities and disciplined factories, to yield the ideas (if not very extensive, a dearly-cherished stock), which have descended—of late often their only heritage—for centuries from father to son. If you want to change the opinions of an unlettered man, you ought to change his employments and his localities:—you may *chain* an eagle at a mountain's base, but as long as he *sees* the mountain he will struggle to soar into freedom. A Glen Fleskean would not take your purse, but he would not—we write of two-and-twenty years ago—consider it any sin to rive and ride your horse, to seize your gun; commit any "little act" which could be construed into *taking*, not *stealing;* always save and except in the case of strangers —for strangers in Ireland bear a charmed life. The only knowledge of law he had was of its oppression —for where it did not in reality oppress, he was taught to believe it did. Restraint from Celt to Celt would have been endured; but the restraint of Saxon over Celt, has ever been unbearable—more particularly to the Irish cragsman. Every one is willing to sympathise with, or make allowance for, the peculiar habits and customs of the Scottish Highlander—his hatred of the lowlands is considered part of his nature; his "black mail" furnishing subjects worthy of the painter's skill; and his fidelity to the faith of his fathers lauded in song and story! Our Irish Highlanders are surely quite as deserving of sympathy;—their history as full of incident, and their attachment to the faith of their fathers as worthy of praise.

But the splendid tartans of the Scottish Highlanders have gained them as much popularity in England as their chivalry. Sympathy has been more gracious to the tartan than to the rags of the poor Irish peasant.

It is pleasanter to dwell upon rugged scenery, than upon rugged truths; the lion has his lair, the fox his den, and the eagle its eyrie, and there can be little doubt that our natures partake through life of the character of our early associations. This should be borne in mind as an act of justice towards those we judge.

Glen Flesk, as we have said, is like many other Irish glens, noted for the ready refuge it has frequently afforded to outlaws; in truth, to all sorts of "boys," who, for a time, or under peculiar circumstances, found the open plain a dangerous locality. The legendary landmark of the glen is the well-known *Phil-a-dhaoun*, or the demon's cliff. It is a succession of precipitous rocks, feathered, rather than clothed, with foliage, with here and there a miraculously rooted tree, gaining nutriment you hardly know how, and yet throwing its branches far and wide over the gray rock from which it seems to spring. The succession of rocks forms the face of the Crohane mountain, where the valley opens, as it were, to admit the beautiful river, and give full scope to its graceful windings beneath banks, in some places high and picturesque, at others sloping to the water's brink. The old Kenmare road runs between the Flesk and the base of the mountain. Half way up this dangerous, and in stormy weather almost inaccessible ascent, is shown an indentation in the rock, called

*Labbig Owen*, meaning "the bed of Owen;" the said Owen having been a most notorious rapparee and freebooter in old times. It might be imagined that this spot, once so noted as a place of outlaw refuge, would be avoided by others as likely to excite attention; but, on the contrary, the Crohane and Annemore mountains have always been the resort of such as were obliged to seek concealment; and any one who has passed a week of long summer days exploring such of the fastnesses as are attainable by lowland feet, would wonder how it is possible to discover those who seek mountain sanctuary, remembering that, no matter what the reward may be, every man, woman, and child, would suffer death sooner than give up to the law, any, who had the least desire to escape from it; indeed, the bare fact of wishing to "escape the law," is quite sufficient to call, not only Irish sympathy, but Irish ingenuity to the rescue. Owen the Outlaw was, it is said, betrayed by a man called Reardon, who sought, by this act, to gratify private revenge, and succeeded in "murdering" his friend in the glens of Inveleary, to which he had enticed him. He also, with savage ferocity, beheaded his victim; and the reproach of this deed remains to his descendants, who are but little trusted, and are still reproachfully termed *Reardan na ocean*, "Reardon of the head." The whole district is full of traditions. A belief in fairy lore and witchcraft mingles with religious faith, and imparts a more than ordinary degree of wildness and superstition to the habits and feelings of the primitive residents. They know little of the worldly doings of their countrymen beyond the glens; and, as is the

case almost uniformly with the peasant population of Ireland, place implicit reliance on the statements of their clergy—while exercising keen perceptions, with which they are amply endowed, in doubting and investigating whatever comes to them from any other source.

A most commandingly placed wreck of the past—which must perpetually recall to the peasant the tales of former times—is still an object of interest to the stranger. Killala Castle, an old fortalice of the O'Donoghue, was erected to guard this once important pass; and many a night had the treasure-seeker spent in circling its walls, and hunting for the riches he imagined must be concealed in the immediate neighbourhood of the guard-chamber, beneath which it is believed one of the race of Irish giants lies entombed. Every step through this romantic locality is full of beauty and interest, whether visited when the sun shines upon its lovely scenery, or when the storm adds its might to the majesty of the mountains; but the glensmen are grown of late so much like their neighbours, that the imagination must go back to the excited Whiteboyism of our period to see them transformed into Irish Guerillas—resolved to protect whoever sought shelter in their mountain fastnesses.

It was evident that the military had received information that some one they desired to secure was secreted in the glen, and the extraordinary anxiety evinced by Edward Spencer that another route should be pursued by the soldiers, afforded subject for much

speculation to the Master of Macroom and his friends, as to *why* Mr. Spencer's views could be opposed to theirs. Information as to all military movements was so rapidly conveyed, and became known to the people in distant districts in so extraordinary a manner, that unless plans were formed and carried into execution without being breathed of to those who were the agents therein, they were frustrated either previous to the onset or termination of the undertaking. Numberless delays occurred before the detachment that was to scour Glen Flesk was able to leave Macroom, and much astonishment was expressed as to Mr. Spencer's motives for urging the most trifling reasons for further delay.

The approach of the elemental strife, the muttering of the thunder first disturbed the death-like calm in which Glen Flesk had reposed for many hours, seeming at one moment to proceed from the pinnacle of a rock around which the electricity had been discharged, while at another it swept along the arch of heaven, cloud after cloud, blackening and brightening as the forked or sheet lightning mingled with the feverish air.

In the fissure of a rock which commanded an extensive view, and yet when looked at from the road appeared only a long deep crack, two men were seated, evidently in very different situations of life, and yet on terms of equality—both were nearly the same age, but the greatest possible difference existed in their appearance. One reclined completely within the ample crevice, and had so arranged himself as to use a portion of the more elevated rock as a table, upon which rested a

brace of pistols, primed and loaded, and a flask of gunpowder; in one side was a division that held ink, while a few sheets of writing paper were placed before him. The delicate hands, a brilliant ring, and the well cared-for hair of a fair colour and silken quality, no less than the indescribable well putting on of the blue "big coat" and peasant gear of the district, intimated any thing but a glensman; while his companion, who was evidently on the look-out, and heeded neither heat nor cold, wet nor dry, storm nor sunshine, was stretched along at his feet, his hands grasping the edge of the precipice, and his chin resting on his hands, so that his large shaggy head, if seen at all from the road, must have looked like a clod of turf, a lump of withered furze, or a bunch of embrowned heather. The large blue eyes of the gentleman whom Murtogh invariably called "Captain," looked heavy and weary; his elevated, but compressed forehead, was white and feverish, for heat drops stood upon it, which he frequently removed with a silk handkerchief; and there was a mingling of wildness and fervour in the expression of the upper part of his face, that did not at all harmonise with a sensual mouth—still there was energy of purpose, and the wild freedom of "*I will*," in the rapid and loud tracing of his pen, and the determination which contracted his rather extensive eyebrows.

Murtogh "of the Strong Hand" was few removes, perhaps, from a savage. Keen, cunning, revengeful, cruel, but faithful, watchful, and undeviating in his few attachments—superstitious to positive weakness; his dark, deep, blood-shot eye, that never quailed at dif-

ficulty, would tremble amid tears of terror at the mention of a ghost, or a tale of supernatural agency. He seemed (besides his faith) to entertain but two other ideas, or even thoughts—Ireland was his country, and Lawrence Macarthy was his foster-brother. How he came to be separated from him at a time of danger, and attending upon a comparative stranger, was a mystery only to be solved by the knowledge that such was Lawrence Macarthy's desire. The storm was as welcome to Murtogh as the sunshine; unless, indeed, it occurred at some particular time—some festival or unlucky day. Such, however, was not the case on the day alluded to at the commencement of this chapter, and consequently the hardy mountaineer did not deign to notice the huge drops of rain that fell like giant's tears from the full clouds; although they had compelled his companion to withdraw still more closely into the cave of the overhanging rock; a movement noticed only by a scowl of Murtogh's deep fiery eyes. Like all hardy cragsmen, he had a thorough contempt for any one who sheltered from the elements; and like all Irishmen, something closely allied to the same feeling towards all of feeble or delicate appearance. His father had been hung by martial law, while he was yet an infant; his brothers had been transported for Whiteboyism, which caused Murtogh or Murtogh's party to take summary vengeance upon those who had borne witness against them. His mother wandered through the country in a state of half insanity, generally a scarcely covered mendicant, whining for halfpence, or meal, or potatoes, at every door; but in times of popular excitement, a fiend,

a fury—losing all self-command, and thirsting, as much as any tigress, for human sacrifice. Sometimes Murtogh affected not to understand English, but the truth was, he spoke it imperfectly—thinking in Irish, and translating his ideas for the captain's benefit. The latter covered his face with his hands, so vivid were the flashes of lightning in the dark and narrow space to which he had retreated; the act was noted by the keen Murtogh, who muttered something not particularly complimentary to the captain's bravery.

"What are you saying?" inquired his superior, in the tone, if not of an Englishman, of one who had spent much time in the country of the Saxon.

"That yer honour's not fond of flame," was the reply. "I've seen the lightning scorch Macarthy's eyelashes, and he wouldn't wink."

At that moment a blast of the fire-king's breath struck a tall slender birch-tree, which, with its shining bark and quivering leaves, and young bright look, as it stood beside a sturdy but grovelling oak which extended its thick and lumpish trunk first in one direction, then in another—had seemed the young Apollo of trees. It was wonderful to see the white light shimmer and shiver amid the sapful branches, which in an instant it blasted, and burnt, and tossed to the storm as unworthy of further trouble, peeling the bark off the bleeding body, and then leaping from its prey to the rock, which it shattered into a thousand fragments, that went hurling and tumbling into the valley below. While the Spirit of the Clouds, so fierce and mysterious, so abrupt and all powerful, was buried fathoms deep in

the mountain, impregnating the air with a dense and suffocating vapour, Murtogh raised himself a little on his elbow, and with his right-hand crossed himself on both brow and breast, and then resumed his position. The storm now changed into a hurricane of wind and rain. The torrent poured and whirled in such a manner, that the glensman could discern nothing beneath but drifts upon drifts of rain and mist—clouds of water in perpetual movement, now of a deep lead colour, and then of a pale gray—on and on they swept, impelled by the rushing winds.

"What a dreadful storm, Murtogh!" said the gentleman, folding his *cotamore* still more closely round him, chilled by the damp raw air, and so oppressed by the state of the atmosphere and his own peculiar situation, as to be scarcely able to breathe; "what a dreadful storm, Murtogh! is it often as bad as this?"

Murtogh rolled himself over and over, so as to get nearer his companion, and answered, "Dis is a noting, Sir—a little fire and noise, and some fog."

"Why, look at that tree," said the young man, pointing to where a tortured branch of the stricken birch, held on to the shattered stem by a long line of the bark, was twisting in the wind; "the bough seems to wave a notice to us, that we may be so served at a moment's warning."

"Or widout it," said Murtogh, "be dad and dad, captain, we may get no warning at all; why would we be better off den our naighbours?"

"If," muttered the captain, "they would but combine—if any thing like a simultaneous rising was or-

ganised, our long-promised help would soon arrive; but before they are up in one place they are down in another, meeting by moonlight and separating, satisfied with burning a house, or murdering a farmer, or drawing a man's coffin on a door."

"And isn't dat doing a grate dale?" whispered Murtogh, who, with his habitual freedom, had drawn himself up close to the gentleman; "sure for every one we send off, we have one tyrant or one wake heart de less; and if de boys of all Ireland kep on true to dat, sure we'd soon have de land agin,—finish all dat we don't like dat's in it, and let none we don't like come in it—dat's de plan."

The young man made no reply to this, but the contrast between the sun-dyed brown of his companion's (or attendant's, call him which you please) face, and his own pale thin features, made him seem more dejected than ever.

"Dere's a good many away, one place and de oder," persisted Murtogh, "and a power and all dead, God bless us! who tought demselves sure enough of dere dirty lives dis time twelvemonts; and dere would have been more but from two or tree turning off from dere work —dey'll do so no more; a turner back is worse dan if he never came on."

Whether this was, or was not a hint to his less determined associate, it is impossible to tell, but he changed the subject immediately by observing, "The Macarthy said you would tell me what luck you had at the last drawing?"

"Grate luck, be dad and dad, captain, only for one

ting dat I can't forget. I had been wid de boys to Lanty Lurgan, de schoolmaster's, who writes de notices for us, he's such fine larning—he says to us, 'Boys, ye have noting to do wid de government, lave dat to de counsellor, but get rid of de landlords and de middlemen, and don't lave one alive in de place dat brakes yer laws; if de bit o' land is taken contrary to de laws—no matter who it's by,' he says, 'you know your duty.'"

"Suppose," interrupted the captain, "your own brother was to take land from which a tenant had been ejected for not paying his rent, what would you do?"

"No broder of mine would ever do a ting like dat," growled Murtogh.

"But if he did?"

"Where's de good o' saying what couldn't be?" replied the half savage.

"But it might be; brothers are not always alike; suppose it was—what would you do?"

"Dey'd not ax me to do de job," he answered, with indifference.

"But you'd warn him?"

"He'd get our reg'lar warning."

"But in such a case, wouldn't you prevent it?"

"I couldn't, captain, I couldn't. If he went agin' rules, why I couldn't help him."

"But, Murtogh, you could prevent it, by giving information."

Murtogh sprang up as if he had been shot, looked steadily at the captain, while his frame quivered with passion, and then in a voice of apparent agony said,

"Och, captain, what did I ever do to you to make ye think I'd turn informer?"

"I did but jest, Murtogh," said the stranger, "I did but jest."

"It's an unnatural joke den, be dad! and I'd rader yer honour didn't try it on me agin. Sure we prove every day dat we've no care for life or death—dat we'll live in a master's house and ate his food for seven years, and yet not put away de gun dat's pointed at his heart, if he brakes our laws, and turns out an ould tenant for a new one."

"Suppose the old tenant won't pay?"

"Sure every boy would pay if he could."

"Not always—suppose he was a scoundrel."

"Don't make me mad again, captain, wid yer supposings. What's dat to me? if my oath is marked down in heaven, and I'm under command—broder, fader, friend—it's all one."

"Ah, Murtogh, you're a fine fellow, caring for nothing but the 'wild justice of revenge,' I see," answered the captain.

Murtogh did not quite understand the words, and said, "Say dat again, iv you plaze."

"I said you cared for nothing but the wild justice of revenge."

"If one takes my life," he answered shrewdly, "by taking all I have to keep de life in me and mine, it's raale justice to take his for it. But I'll own to de revenge," he said, rubbing his head violently with his hand, "I'll own to de revenge. I'm ready night or day to 'attind when called on,'—it's all one," and he eyed

his questioner closely and suspiciously, not certain as to his meaning.

"Well, go on with Lanty Lurgan's opinions—the story of your luck," said the gentleman.

"Oh, Lanty's a fine man! has a power o' knowledge, and sure if he, a priest's broder's son, would join us, it's asy known we're in de right, every way. Sure when de like o' dem dat has larning is for a ting, what call have we to stir only as we're bid. It's a fine ting to have de likes o' dem to stand up for us, and by us, and sure it's dey have all de weight of it on demselves; and so bee de same token, says Lanty, 'Who should I see at de last fair, where I wint to sell de little pig dat I tuck from de Widdy Murphy for her son's quarter's Latin, and to buy mee little things for mee little school—who should I see swaggerin' trough de fair, in a bran new baaver and top-boots, an' de price of de cow he distrained on from *one of us* by de Blackwater—but Japers Connel; and by de same token he had a *bulldog* in his breast; and, boys, he got notice on his own house-door twice; and once, an' he on de road home afther *making his sowl,* De 'Silent Foot' put anoder into his hand to tell him he must quit de land he tuck over Riley's head, or suffer for it—for he had de two crimes on himself.'"

"Riley of the Stream?" questioned the captain.

"De same, captain, dat was transported, and his bit o' land tuck from his broder; 'So boys,' says de schoolmaster, 'it's all fair and round as eggs, dat his account must be made up quick; he got his notice like any gintleman, and dat tree times; and after dat de boys

mind de rule, 'to attind when called on;' 'and now,' he says, 'we ought to draw lots whose to do de little job out of de way at once, for it's bad example afther de notice, to see him swaggering about;' de last fellow of de kind we got *shut of*, de Blackwater boys did it for *us*—and now *our* turn to do it for *dem*. Well, it was all 'attind when called on,' and de lot fell on Paddy Lacey."

"Why I thought it was you had the luck!" interrupted the gentleman.

Moving a little so as to turn his back in a degree to the storm, Murtogh took no notice of the interruption, but continued:

"Well, Paddy was overjoyed, because his sister was to be married de same night to a Blackwater boy, and it was mighty convanient to 'attind when called on;' and get de fun of de wedding altogeder—and he says to me, 'I owe you a kind turn, Murtogh, for de alibi you swore to, last 'sizes, for my fader's broder-in-law—as bould as a ram.' 'Oh! dat's noting,' I says, laughing, 'betwixt friends, noting at all; it's grate fun, a downright raale alibi, swore and proved through as good as forty oaths, in an' out—boddering de big wigs, just when dey tink dey have it all dere own way; de poor boy trembling in de dock wid de rope round his neck, and no more trouble to de law, but to pull it! When in comes forty witnesses to prove de alibi! Oh, it's raale glory!—and de faces of 'em!'

"Well, though he'd no more mind his call den shooting a rat, he tought a dale of, as he called it, poor fellow, my parjuring my *sowl* for his fader's broder-in-law—and more, on account of fearing to go nigh de priest, to

get ase in his own mind—through a pilgrimage, or someting like dat. 'So come wid me,' he says, 'now, de girls at de Blackwater are as fond as yerself of music; and we'll settle Connel at de same time; only remember, I'm first, and you're second.'"

"You had never seen Connel, had you?" inquired the captain.

"Och! no, he never did harm to me or mine; I had no call to the man at all, and was as innocent as any babby of an ill thought towards him or his:—praise be to God! But I had all his marks; and so I quit, wid Paddy Lacey, and mighty pleasant walking it was, as any one could desire, falling in wid our own boys now and agin, changing our little pass-words, and hearing de news—mighty pleasant; only once, when we had a meeting at a place beyond Macroom—dey call it by de name of Kilcrea—all de boys in dere white shirts."

"Were you there?" inquired the captain.

"Sure an' I went near it," he answered, shuddering, "but couldn't get to it, on account, Sir, of de spirits, and de tousands o' dry bones piled to all etarnity in de holy ground. Why even Master Matt has no call to Kilcrea—devil a bit—after ten at night! De four-leaved shamrogue he carries in his breast lets him into sacrets, and so he wouldn't touch a stone. I couldn't go; though Lacey did. I knelt down by de first arch of de bridge to keep de water betwixt me and de spirits, and said every prayer ould Madam Macarthy ever taught me, when I used to be playing pitch and toss and hurley wid de young master long ago—and she'd make us both kneel down (God be good to her!)

and say over the pather and the aves, and then curse de Orangemen. Oh, it's she was de fine woman entirely—and de grate saint!"

"I remember Lawrence telling me you were afraid of spirits," said the young man, carelessly; "but the Kilcrea meeting was a great loss. Every man that night swore *the* OATH at the altar, and bent his knee over the tomb of Arthur O'Leary. It seemed," he said, sighing, "a gathering for a great purpose. You ought to have been there, Murtogh."

"One can't have luck right and left," said Murtogh, "as I know to my cost. If de daylight was in it, I'd ha' been dere too, but I can't abide bones. When Lacey came to me I was more dead den alive, for fear of de spirits. But we had fine company into Cork, just for a spree, and den de next morning we found our ground; and I wanted to get it over quick; for de man never did noting to me; only Paddy paid me de compliment on account of de good turn I tould you of."

"And did you find Connel at once?"

"Bee Gorra! we did not. He was gone to Kilkinny; and we war bound to follow him dere; but hearing he was to be back de next night, we tuck our fill of de whiskey punch, and de dancin' dat night at de wedding, and lay about de place, inquiring for work de next morning."

"And you caught him, did you?" inquired the young man, in a tone of voice which would lead to the belief that he would have been better pleased if the man had escaped.

"We did. Dere was a little grove o' trees close to his gate inside, and a high hedge opposite. We hid under de hedge—and Paddy saw him come riding down de road. I tought, as he came up at a canter, dat we had no luck, for his eldest boy ran up de avenue and unfastened de gate. It was as much as Paddy could do to keep hisself from shootin' de young blaguard, but tree or four of de young ones had got into de grove o' trees, and put dere little faces over de ditch, shouting 'Fader, fader.' And he pulled up, and tossed over his hat among 'em; and it was half full of playtings for dem; and faix I'll not deny dat de shout of dere joy made meeself unasy, just at de minit, an' I forgot how he acted contrary to our rules—taking and keeping land over our heads—I forgot all. 'Paddy,' says I—bang went de shot, *his bald head was de mark*, and Paddy wasn't de fool to miss it—dere was no need of a second! Dat was my last draw, and but for it I'd have had a shout at black Aby's burning; only dat was done in a hurry: ye may fire a shot in a hurry, captain, but it's mortial bad not to tink and get all safe at a burnin', for it wakes up de counthry."

"And—and—did you shoot the children?" inquired the captain, and it might be that the keenness of the mountain air made him shudder.

Murtogh turned towards him a look of intense disgust.

"Shoot de childre! is it shoot de childre ye said, Sir? be dad any one who has been a sojur has no heart in his body—shoot de grawleens; yarra! *is it murderers ye'd have us be, captain?* The Lord forgive ye!"

"And did no one see you? It was day, I think you said?"

"Ough, ay! plinty saw us; but sure they are all sworn in; they knew it was all according to our law; sure where's the good o' thinking about it; he brought it on himself; he had as fair warning as ever a man had in his life, and there's the end of it; he had a mighty fine funeral—for barring he was hard on the tenants he was good to the poor."

"Did you go to the funeral?"

"I did not; I never care to hear an ullagawn any more than to see ould bones."

There was a long pause.

"Is that another clap of thunder?" inquired the captain, at the same instant starting to his feet, and then wincing as if from extreme pain.

Murtogh was instantly at his old post, but this time his head projected considerably over the cliff, not so as to distinguish objects, any effort to do that would have been unavailing, but evidently placed to catch any sound that the dense atmosphere permitted to ascend.

"Again!" exclaimed the captain, "*that* is not thunder," he added, and his nature seemed as if called by some sudden and mysterious power into active life.

END OF VOL. I.

C. WHITING, BEAUFORT HOUSE, STRAND.

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